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THE BOOK OF DANIEL

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DANIEL'S PREDICTIONS

by

W. EDMUND FILMER



REGENCY PRESS
LONDON AND NEW YORK

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ISBN 0 7212 0593 3

This book can also be purchased from:

Australia—Book Wholesale Co. Ltd., 89-97 Jones Street, Ullimo, NSW 2007, Australia.

Africa—Hephzibah Publishing Co. Ltd., 6 L'yalla Street, Mushin, P.O. Box 32, Oshodi, Lagos State, Nigeria.

South Africa—12 Olga Buildings, 121 President Street, Johannesburg, South Africa.

United States of America—Samuel Weiser & Co., 734 Broadway, New York, NY 10003, U.S.A.

Printed in Great Britain for

REGENCY PRESS (London & New York) LTD.,
43 NEW OXFORD STREET, LONDON, WC1A 1BH

PREFACE

The Book of Daniel has probably been subjected to more hostile criticism than any other Book in the Bible. Its author tells us that he, Daniel, was one of several Jewish captives taken to Babylon in 605 B.C. He records in his second chapter a prophecy claiming to cover in broad outline the rise and fall of empires from his own day till the Day of Judgement. Subsequent chapters go into greater detail about the main events of world history.

That is all nonsense, say the critics; the Book is a fraud. The author was never in Babylon, and insofar as his predictions agree with world history, they must have been written after the event. Two or three centuries ago Daniel was accepted as a divinely inspired prophet, but today our academics declare his Book has neither historical nor prophetic value. Their arguments will be examined and refuted in Chapters Five and Ten.

There are several reasons for this change of attitude. Writers in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made a number of errors, some of which were due to their limited knowledge of history, but more particularly because they misunderstood certain key verses relating to events that were future in their day. When these events did not turn out as they expected, their basic assumptions were questioned, and the prophecies as a whole were rejected.

The explanation of the prophecies now being put forward is basically the same as the historicist interpretation which was taught by the Protestant Reformers two hundred years ago. It is not, however, a restatement of their views, but a radical revision in which their erroneous positions have been rejected. All the prophecies have been carefully reassessed, and correlated with the known facts of history. In order to help the reader to verify for himself that the prophecies really do give an accurate forecast of the events, standard history books are quoted, and page references are given. The student is strongly recommended to read these quotations in their full context. There is nothing to equal this way of reassuring oneself that Daniel's prophecies are a divinely inspired revelation of God.

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
<i>Preface</i>	
1. Historical Background - - - -	9
Daniel's Ministry	12
2. The Succession of Empires - - - -	13
1. The Four Empires	15
2. Divided Dominion	17
3. The Kingdom of God	18
3. The Fiery Furnace - - - -	20
1. Allegorical Prophecies	20
2. The Fiery Furnace	21
3. Allegorical Application	22
4. The Great Tree - - - -	25
The Age of Predaceous Empires	29
The Time Period	37
5. The Fall of Babylon - - - -	44
1. Historical Background	45
2. Allegorical Interpretation	50
3. The Writing on the Wall	51
6. Daniel in the Lion's Den - - - -	53
1. Darius the Mede	53
2. Daniel in the Den of Lions	55
3. Allegorical Interpretation	56
7. The Fourth Beast - - - -	60
1. The Four Beasts	60
2. The Fourth Beast	64
3. The Ten Horns	66
4. Three Horns Plucked Up	70
5. The Little Horn	74
6. The Ancient of Days	82
7. The Time Period	84
8. The Kingdom of God	87

Chapter	Page
8. The Ram and the He-goat - - - -	88
1. The Great Horn	89
2. The Four Horns	90
3. The Time of Fulfilment	91
4. The Rise of the Little Horn	92
5. The Daily Sacrifice	93
6. The King of Bold Countenance	94
7. The Time Period	98
9. The Coming of Messiah - - - -	101
1. The Six Items	102
2. The Command to Restore Jerusalem	104
3. The First Seven Weeks	107
4. The Final Week	110
5. The Covenant Confirmed	111
6. The Daily Sacrifice	112
7. Subsequent Desolations	113
10. Daniel's Last Prophecy - - - -	115
11. Wars in the Holy Land - - - -	119
1. Persia and Greece	119
2. The Laodicean Wars	120
3. Antiochus the Great	121
4. Antiochus Epiphanes	125
5. The Roman Period	128
6. The Byzantine Emperors	134
7. The Moslem Period	139
12. The End of the Age - - - -	145
1. Michael	146
2. A Time of Trouble	146
3. The Second Advent	148
4. A Time for Instruction	149
5. The Time Periods	150
6. Conclusion	155
<i>Chronological Appendix</i> - - - -	157

REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

All quotations from the Bible are from the Revised Standard Version (RSV) unless otherwise stated.

AV	Authorised Version.
CAH	Cambridge Ancient History.
CCK	D. J. Wiseman: <i>Chronicles of the Chaldean Kings</i> , British Museum.
CMH	Cambridge Medieval History.
CModH	Cambridge Modern History.
Gibbon	Gibbon's <i>Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</i> , Everyman's Library edition.
GNB	Good News Bible
Milman	H. H. Milman: <i>History of Latin Christianity</i> (3rd ed. 1864).
NCMH	New Cambridge Modern History.
NEB	New English Bible
Wylie	J. A. Wylie: <i>History of Protestantism</i> .

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

More than a century before the time of Daniel, the ten tribes of Israel, which had declared their independence after the death of Solomon, were carried away into exile by the Assyrians. This fate had been predicted by Isaiah and other prophets, because they had failed to keep God's laws and persisted in the worship of false gods. At that time the house of Judah, consisting of the remaining tribes, Judah and Benjamin, along with some Levites, had been saved under their pious king Hezekiah. But in the reign of his son Manasseh their sins became even worse than those of Israel. So Jeremiah finally foretold that they, too, would go into exile, although some would be allowed to return after seventy years.

The position of Assyria as dominant world power was challenged in 626 B.C. by Nabopolassar, king of Babylon.¹ He progressively wore down Assyrian power until in 612 he captured and destroyed their capital Nineveh. In 609 all Assyrian resistance came to an end,² and Egypt alone remained as contender for world supremacy. In 606 B.C. Egyptian forces near the Euphrates overthrew the Babylonian garrison there, and fighting continued for other bridgeheads across the river.³ Consequently, in 605 Nabopolassar sent an army led by his son Nebuchadnezzar against the Egyptians based at Carchemish. The ensuing battle was decisive, the Egyptians being almost entirely wiped out, while those who managed to escape were overtaken and destroyed as they fled homewards through Syria and Palestine.

¹ CCK, p. 7.

² CCK, p. 17 f.

³ CCK, p. 20 f.

The immediate effect of their victory was that the Babylonians conquered these countries which they called the "Hatti-lands". However, the sudden death of king Nabopolassar on 15th August, 605 B.C., intervened before Nebuchadnezzar could formally make the people his subjects. On hearing of the death of his father, the crown prince gave instructions for the captives he had taken from the Jews, Phoenicians, and Syrians to be taken to Babylon,⁴ while he hurried home by the shortest route to be crowned king on 7th September, 605 B.C.⁵

It is in this context that we can place the statement with which the Book of Daniel begins: "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god" (v. 1-2).

The Babylonian army had evidently begun to besiege Jerusalem, but it would appear that Jehoiakim bought his freedom on this occasion by handing over as ransom "part of the vessels of the house of God", together with "some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility. . . . Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah" (vv. 3 and 6). Since Nebuchadnezzar gave instructions for these captives to be sent to Babylon before he hurried off at the end of August for his coronation, it follows that Daniel and his companions were deported well within the third year of Jehoiakim which ended in the autumn of 605 B.C. (see Chronological Table and Appendix).

Owing to his sudden departure for Babylon and the subsequent coronation ceremonies, it was not until the following year, 604 B.C., that Nebuchadnezzar was able to return to the "Hatti-lands" to accept the formal submission of its rulers, among whom was Jehoiakim king of Judah. He made a second attack on Jerusalem in the spring of 597, when a large number of captives were taken to Babylon, including the prophet Ezekiel. Jerusalem finally fell in 586 B.C. after a siege of two-and-a-half years. All this time Jeremiah had been predicting this doom, and after the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, he escaped to Egypt with a residue of the Jews and the king's daughters.

⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities*, X, xi, 1.

⁵ CCK, p. 27.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE			
JUDAH		B.C.	BABYLON & EGYPT
	Jehoiakim	609	17 Nabopolassar
	Ac	608	18
	1	607	19
	2	606	20
	3	605	21 Battle of Carchemish
	4	604	22 Nebuchadnezzar
First Surrender of Jerusalem →	5	603	1
	6	602	2
	7	601	3
	8	600	4 Babylonian defeat in Egypt
	9	599	5
	10	598	6
	11	597	7
Second Surrender →	Jehoiachin Zedekiah	597	8
	1	596	9
	2	595	10
	3	594	11
	4	593	12
	5	592	13
	6	591	14
	7	590	15
	8	589	16
Siege of Jerusalem began →	9	588	17
	10	587	18 Egyptian army present
Final fall of Jerusalem →	11	586	19

At this critical time in history, when the chosen people had all gone into exile, God raised up these three great prophets, Jeremiah in Jerusalem, Ezekiel and Daniel in Babylon, through whom the

future course of world history was to be revealed. The first two were concerned mainly with the destiny of Israel and Judah, while it was Daniel who foretold that a succession of Gentile powers would rule over Jerusalem and the Promised Land.

Daniel's Ministry

Daniel, on account of his remarkable gift in understanding visions and dreams, found favour with Nebuchadnezzar, and remained in the court of the Babylonian kings until that empire was overthrown by the Persians nearly seventy years later (Dan. 1:21). He was one of a select group of youths who had been chosen to receive a three years' course in "the letters and language of the Chaldeans", and be given a special provision of food and wine from the royal household (1:4-5). The Chaldeans were the ruling class in Babylon, among whom were the priests and astrologers, so the youths' education evidently included indoctrination into heathen arts and crafts.

Daniel and his three companions were, however, godly young men, and so refused to accept all they were offered. For example, they would not eat the meat, nor drink the wine they were given, perhaps because the animals had not been slaughtered according to Jewish law, or the wine had formed part of some pagan offering. Instead, they requested water and a vegetarian diet. This they were granted by the steward who was in charge of them, after he had reassured himself that their health was not going to suffer from what he evidently regarded as inferior food.

At the end of their period of education, they were examined by the king who pronounced them "ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom" (1:20).

In fact, even before Daniel had completed his course of education, he was given, as we shall see, an opportunity to interpret one of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams when all the Chaldeans had failed. In consequence he was promoted to the highest rank in the king's court, while his companions were given appointments in the provinces (2:49).

CHAPTER TWO

THE SUCCESSION OF EMPIRES

Nothing could be more simple than Daniel's first prophecy given in Chapter 2, yet it is here that some of the most fundamental errors are made. Nebuchadnezzar had had a dream, and he enquired of his wise men what it meant. To make sure that he got a genuine answer, he demanded that he be told first what he had dreamed; this would reveal whether the soothsayer was able to give him the true interpretation. After the Chaldeans had failed to comply with the king's demand, Daniel came to tell the king "There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days" (v. 28). "The latter days" is a term used in the Old Testament to indicate the whole Christian era, and it is equivalent to "the last days" spoken of in the New Testament. This is evident from such statements as Hebrews 1:1-2: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son (see also 1 John 2:18). It follows that Nebuchadnezzar's dream was a revelation of future events extending well into the Christian era.

Daniel informed the king that he had seen in his dream a great image or statue made of four different metals, but its feet were a mixture of iron and clay. This image was destroyed when it was struck on the feet by a stone which then became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Daniel explained that the image signified a sequence of four great empires followed by a period when the nations would be disunited. Finally, all these human governments would be swept away, and replaced by the kingdom of God.

It is commonly believed that the image was divided into four parts, representing four empires, but a mere child who has not already been indoctrinated with this idea would naturally count five. Daniel said, "The head of this image was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay (vv. 32-33). Notice that after each of the five parts of the body has been named, we are told the material of which it was made:

1. Head of gold
2. Breast and arms of silver
3. Belly and thighs of brass
4. Legs of iron
5. Feet of iron and clay.

This should make it clear that the feet are described as a fifth section separately from the legs.

The same five divisions are clearly marked off in Daniel's interpretation, even though inaccurate translation has partly obscured the fact: "You are the head of gold," he said. "After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things; and like iron which crushes, it shall break and crush all these" (Dan. 2:38-40). The fifth section, represented by the feet, is then described separately: "And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. As you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay" (v. 41-43).

When they say here "*It* shall be a divided kingdom", the translators appear to have been led astray by the popular view that the fourth kingdom is still being described. In the Hebrew there is no pronoun "*it*" which would have identified the divided kingdom with the foregoing fourth. The Hebrew construction is exactly the same as in the previous verse where it reads correctly "There shall be a fourth kingdom strong as iron", not "*it* shall be a fourth kingdom". Verse 41 ought, therefore, to have been translated, as in

verse 40 "There shall be a divided kingdom." The AV is also in error where it says, "*The* kingdom shall be divided." In the Hebrew there is no definite article with the word "kingdom" which would have identified the divided kingdom with the previously named fourth kingdom. To identify the divided kingdom with the fourth would also involve a contradiction, for the prophecy says that the fourth kingdom shall be "strong as iron", whereas the divided kingdom "shall be partly strong and partly brittle". It cannot be too strongly emphasised that verses 41 to 43 describe a separate fifth and final period following the fourth empire, when the kingdom, that is world dominion, shall be divided, and "they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay".

1. The Four Empires

The essential common feature of the four empires is that they should rule over all the earth. Nebuchadnezzar was told that the God of heaven had committed into his hands, "wherever they dwell, the sons of men, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air", making him "ruler over them all" (v. 38). Of the second and third kingdoms it was said that they "shall rule over all the earth" (v. 38). The fourth kingdom was to "break and crush all these" (v. 40). When, therefore, we are told of a fifth and final phase, when "there shall be a divided kingdom", it must mean that world dominion will be divided, that is to say, one kingdom or nation will not dominate the rest of the world.

There can be no doubt that so far this prophecy has already been fulfilled in world history. The Babylonian empire of Nebuchadnezzar, for a time the most powerful in the world, was overthrown and succeeded by that of the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C. This in turn was followed by the Greek empire founded by Alexander the Great, while the fourth world empire was that of Rome. Furthermore, it is manifest that since the dissolution of the Roman empire, the nations of western Asia and the Mediterranean area, which constituted the world known to Nebuchadnezzar, have been disunited, and no single power has ever predominated.

Now a special feature of the image was that its component parts were made of different metals in descending order of value, namely gold, silver, bronze and iron. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar, "You are the head of gold. After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you." In explaining why Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, Daniel had said, "You, O king, are the king of kings to whom

the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory" (v. 37). Nebuchadnezzar's rule was that of an absolute dictator, for in Chapter 5 we are told that "all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him; whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; whom he would he raised up, and whom he would he put down" (v. 19).

Although the Medo-Persian empire that followed was greater in extent than the Babylonian, the power vested in the king was inferior, and evidently restricted by constitutional limitations, for a law once passed could not be altered, even by the king himself. This is mentioned in Daniel 6:15: "Know, O king, it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance which the king established can be changed." The same restriction on the king's power is also mentioned in Esther 1:19 and 8:8.

Alexander the Great, founder of the Greek empire, had even less power, for it had been written into the original Greek constitution that "All League states should be free and self-governing, and that their internal constitutions should not be interfered with." Alexander set up similar loosely bound local governments throughout all the vast territories that he conquered.

The most notable and permanent feature of the Roman constitution was that the government was shared by the Senate, consisting of several hundred prominent citizens.² This body, which had existed from earliest times, was responsible for appointing or electing the supreme heads of state, whether kings, consuls or emperors. Although some of the later emperors did establish dynasties, in theory at least, each held office only "by the authority of the senate, and the consent of the soldiers".³

The Romans were, however, often more harsh and brutal than their predecessors. To those who submitted meekly to their rule they were lenient, but those who opposed them were ruthlessly smashed. Thus of the Macedonians, history records that one short campaign broke the last military power of Greece: "Individuals who had opposed Rome were visited with death and confiscation, democracies which had encouraged the masses against Rome were overthrown, leagues—Achaean, Boeotian, Euboean, Phocian and

¹ CAH VI, p. 355.

² 1 Maccabees 8:14-15.

³ CMH IV, p. 728; Gibbon I, p. 73.

Locrian—were dissolved. Thebes and Chalcis were partly destroyed. But for Corinth was reserved the harder fate. The city was burnt, and its contents, above all its art treasures, were sold or carried off to Rome."⁴ This aspect of the fourth empire was foretold by Daniel who said, "Because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things, and like iron which crushes, it shall break and crush all these" (Dan. 2:40). Even Gibbon, who had little respect either for the Christian faith or Bible prophecy, acknowledged the pertinence of Daniel's words, and recorded that "The images of gold, or silver, or brass that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome."⁵

2. The Divided Dominion

Following the removal of the government from Rome to Constantinople, the Roman empire continued to be the dominant world power until the empire collapsed under the onslaught of the Turks following the route of their army at the battle of Manzikert in 1071. Since then no single nation or power has occupied such a place of predominance in the world. For the past nine hundred years the various nations that once made up the mighty Roman empire have, for the most part, been disunited, as Daniel foretold: "They will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay." (2:43). It has been suggested by several writers⁶ that the clay represents the democratic form of government which has become more and more prevalent in modern times. As a consequence of the feet being part of iron and part of clay, "so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle" (v. 42). The "miry" clay in verses 41 and 43, is better translated as "common clay" in the NEB, for it has evidently been baked to form brittle pottery. In that form it could well symbolise the ease with which democratically elected rulers or governments can be broken and overthrown by a general election.

Parts of the feet, however, were made of iron. This does not imply, as some have supposed, that the Roman empire was to continue during the fifth period of history. The empires were represented by parts of the body, the head, breast and arms, belly, and legs, but the type of government by the material of which they were

⁴ CAH VIII, p. 304.

⁵ Gibbon IV, p. 104.

⁶ e.g. A. C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel*, p. 31; G. R. King, *Daniel* (1966), p. 71.

made. The existence of iron in the feet beside the clay denotes, therefore, that imperial monarchies of the Roman type would continue alongside democratically elected governments during the fifth period of world history.

3. The Kingdom of God

The image was finally destroyed when it was struck on the feet by a stone "cut out by no human hand" (v. 34). In the interpretation we are told that "in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (v. 44). In the New Testament this kingdom of the God of heaven is called either "the kingdom of God", or "the kingdom of heaven".¹ It is represented in the dream as having a separate origin from the image, as a stone cut out by no human hand, to denote that it was not of human origin. The figure of a stone would naturally convey some such idea to Nebuchadnezzar, because stone was foreign to Babylon which was built on the alluvial soil of the Euphrates. Scripturally the stone symbolises Christ, for our Lord Himself said, "Have you never read in the scriptures, 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.' " Then, with evident reference to Daniel's prophecy, He added, "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but when it falls on anyone, it will crush him" (Matt. 21:42, 44).

According to Daniel's interpretation, the kingdom of God was to be set up "in the days of those kings". The only kings mentioned in this chapter are those that represent the four empires, so we must conclude that the kingdom of God was to have its beginning during the existence of those empires. This evidently excludes the earthly kingdom of Israel which had been established under David long before the time of Nebuchadnezzar. In fact, Daniel clearly speaks of the founding of the kingdom as future in his own day, saying, "A great God has made known to the king what shall be hereafter" (v. 45).

On the other hand, "in the days of those kings" requires that the stone kingdom must have been founded before the fourth empire came to an end. Now John the Baptist proclaimed, and our Lord confirmed that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). It was evidently founded during His lifetime for He also declared that "The kingdom of God is in the midst of you"

¹ O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (1945), p. 67 f.

(Luke 17:21). The implied supernatural origin of the kingdom may be seen in the first instance in the virgin birth of Christ, or in His miraculous resurrection from the dead, but subsequently in the spiritual regeneration of His followers as they acknowledged Him as Lord, and became members of a body of people, the Church (1 Peter 2:4-5). All this began in the time of the Roman empire in accordance with the prophecy.

In the dream, the stone "smote the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces" (v. 34). Since the image was struck on its feet, the event described here could not have taken place until long after the Roman empire had fallen, and since it brings to an end the fifth and last period of world history, it must still be future.

"Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (v. 35). This indicates that, although the four empires had each in turn fallen, their forms of government, represented by the metals, would still be found in the world until finally removed by the kingdom of God.

The smashing of the image is evidently sudden, denoting a catastrophic end to the age of world government by sinful men, and its replacement by the righteous rule of Christ. This is again foretold in Revelations 11:15: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." It is generally believed that this will come about when Jesus Christ returns to judge the world.

During the present age, the kingdom of God is represented only by a stone. It is not until after the image was smashed that the stone "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (2:35). This says clearly that when Jesus Christ returns, His kingdom is to be established on this earth; the idea that the kingdom of heaven is a spirit world, to be vaguely thought of as existing somewhere in outer space, is a piece of Greek philosophy that has erroneously been grafted into the Christian religion. Such an idea has no scriptural foundation.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FIERY FURNACE

We have seen that Daniel was one of a number of hostages taken captive to Babylon in 605 B.C. In his second chapter we saw how his prophetic ministry began, when he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream. He was able to reveal that a sequence of four Gentile empires would dominate the world as it was known at that time. These empires were evidently Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. These empires were to be followed by a period when world dominion would be divided, after which the kingdom of God was to be established on earth. Thus he covered in broad outline the political history of the world from about 600 B.C. down to the time of the return of Jesus Christ to establish His everlasting kingdom.

1. Allegorical Prophecies

Chapters 3 to 6 are often regarded as historical narratives, rather than as prophecy. There is, nevertheless, good reason for considering them as allegorical prophecies, for they evidently typify certain general conditions that have prevailed throughout world history. Allegorical prophecies are by no means uncommon in the Bible, a well-known example being that of Abraham and his two wives, Hagar and Sarah: "Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants," Hagar representing the old covenant relationship between God and His people, Sarah, the new covenant (Gal. 4: 21-26). Other examples include the account of the children of the prophet Hosea in the early chapters of his book.

If we regard Daniel chapters 3 to 6 as allegorical predictions, we can see that the first half of Daniel's book comprises prophecies about world history in general, while the second half contains prophecies relating to particular powers or places. The arrangement is

like that of an atlas in which maps of the world come first, showing political and physical features, after which there follow maps of individual countries on a larger scale. In Daniel this division is also marked by the dating of the chapters: in the first half these follow in chronological order as far as chapter 6, and then jump back to the first year of Belshazzar in chapter 7 with the remaining chapters again in chronological order.

In chapters 3 to 6 we can observe a symmetrical arrangement in that chapters 3 and 6 are narratives about Jews, while chapters 4 and 5 relate to Babylonian kings. In chapter 3 we have the story of Daniel's three companions who defied the king's decree to worship his golden image, and in consequence were thrown into a fiery furnace from which they eventually emerged unscathed. In chapter 6, we have a similar story about Daniel himself who continued to pray to his own God in defiance of the king's decree, whereupon he was thrown into a den of lions from which he also emerged unscathed. These two chapters appear to describe the behaviour of the Gentile world rulers to God's people during the time of their dominion over the world.

2. The Fiery Furnace

Daniel tells us in chapter 3 that "King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits, and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon" (v. 1). These proportions are not those of a human figure, but the height may have included a pedestal, similar to that described by Herodotus, who said that in the temple of Babylon there was "a great sitting figure of Bel, all of gold on a golden throne, supported on a base of gold, with a golden table standing beside it." When the image was to be dedicated, Nebuchadnezzar called all ranks of government officials throughout the land to the ceremony, and then commanded that, when summoned by the sound of all kinds of musical instruments, they were to fall down and worship the golden image. The penalty for failing to obey was to be cast into a burning fiery furnace.

It was not long before Daniel's companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were accused of failing to serve the gods of Babylon, and neglecting the worship of the golden image. When Nebuchadnezzar warned them that if they failed to comply with his orders, they would be thrown into the fiery furnace, they replied that their God was able to deliver them, but even if He did not, they would

still refuse to serve pagan gods, or worship the golden image. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were therefore thrown into the furnace fully clothed, but in consequence of Nebuchadnezzar's instructions that it should be heated seven times more than usual, those who threw them in got burnt. Then the king was surprised to see the three Jews walking unharmed in the fire, as well as a fourth person whom he described as "like a son of the gods." So he called to them to come out, which they did, quite unharmed without even their clothes or their hair being singed. In consequence of this miraculous deliverance, Nebuchadnezzar made a decree that anyone who said a word against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego was to be put to death, "for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way" (v. 29).

3. Allegorical Application

In the course of world history, Gentile rulers, on a number of occasions, sought to enforce pagan worship on Christians, and to exterminate those who continue to worship the true God. Even before the Christian era, Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria (176-164 B.C.), tried to impose the worship of Greek gods on the Jews. "Burnt offerings, sacrifices, and libations in the temple were forbidden; sabbaths and feast days were to be profaned; the temple and its ministers to be defiled. Altars, idols and sacred precincts were to be established; swine and other unclean beasts to be offered in sacrifice. . . . The penalty for disobedience was death" (1 Maccabees 1:45-50, NEB). An altar to Zeus was set up in the temple at Jerusalem. "All scrolls of the law which were found were torn up and burnt. Anyone discovered in possession of a Book of the Covenant, or conforming to the law, was put to death by the king's sentence" (v. 56-57). But in spite of these and other measures, the Jewish faith survived—in fact, the persecution lasted only a few years, and was followed by a great revival in the true faith.

The early Christians were at all times liable to persecution on account of their refusal to make the customary sacrifices to the pagan gods of Rome. Towards the end of the reign of the emperor Diocletian, a more determined attempt was made to wipe out the Christian church, and enforce sacrifices to pagan deities. Eusebius records that "in the nineteenth year of Diocletian's reign (A.D. 303) . . . an imperial decree was published everywhere, ordering the churches to be razed to the ground and the Scriptures destroyed by fire. . . . Soon afterwards other decrees arrived in rapid succession,

ordering that the presidents of the churches in every place should all be first committed to prison, and then coerced by every possible means into offering sacrifice." Those who refused were "subjected to a series of different tortures, one flogged unmercifully with the whip, another racked and scraped beyond endurance, so that the lives of some came to a most miserable end."¹

Since in reality many martyrs died in these and other persecutions, the miraculous survival of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego cannot be said to symbolise the physical experience of individual Christians, but rather the survival of the Christian church as a whole through times of persecution. Furthermore, just as the survival of the three Jews led to Nebuchadnezzar reversing his policy, and issuing a decree of toleration, so, following the Diocletian persecution, came the Roman emperor Constantine who adopted the Christian faith. He reversed the imperial attitude towards the church in 313 when he issued the Edict of Milan, under which freedom of worship was granted to Christians, and their churches were restored to them.

Throughout history various subtle means have been tried to induce Christians to worship heathen gods. Following the adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman empire in 380, many pagan ideas and superstitions persisted. Then, in an argument about the divine nature of Christ, it was suggested by Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, and agreed by the bishop of Rome at the Council of Ephesus in 431, that the Mother of God was a suitable title for the virgin Mary. This title was, in fact, identical with that of the great Roman goddess Cybele, and could apply equally well to the Egyptian Isis who was often depicted nursing her child Horus. It was also the equivalent of the Babylonian queen of heaven, named Ishtar, whose worship by the Jews had been condemned by Jeremiah (44: 17 ff.).

At first the designation seemed quite harmless, and the emperor Justinian (525-565) dedicated a number of the many churches he built to the Mother of God. But it was not long before pictures and images of the Madonna and Child, indistinguishable from the pagan idols of Isis and Horus, were to be found in Christian places of worship, while prayers and adoration were directed to the Holy Virgin rather than to God. In 787 the second Council of Nicaea

¹ Eusebius, *History of the Church* VIII, 2-3.

defined and regulated the veneration of images, thus seeking to impose a pagan form of worship on subsequent generations of Christians. Its decrees were re-affirmed and endorsed by the Roman church at the Council of Trent in 1545-1563.

There were nevertheless those who refused to bow down to these images, or engage in similar forms of pagan ritual. They believed what the Bible says, namely that "there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2: 5). For this reason they were condemned and persecuted by the Roman church as heretics. Courts of enquiry, known as the Inquisition, were set up all over Europe to enforce worship according to the Roman manner, and those who refused were tortured or put to death. Yet in spite of this and other kinds of religious persecution, the true faith survived, the Reformation took place, and the Protestant denominations emerged triumphant. Finally, since the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, when papal domination was overthrown, the Inquisition was abolished, and freedom of worship has been recognised as a basic human right.

The story of Nebuchadnezzar's attempt to enforce the worship of his golden image, and the survival of the three Jews through their fiery ordeal, leading to the king's decree of tolerance, appears to illustrate the experience of the Christian church. In this sense it is prophetic, and, bearing in mind its position as the first of several similar stories, each of which appears to have a similar allegorical application, we may well regard its inclusion in the Book of Daniel as intended by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate God's foreknowledge of the fiery trials of the Christian church, to which St. Peter also alludes in similar terms (1 Peter 4: 12).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GREAT TREE

The fourth chapter of Daniel appears at first sight to be no more than a proclamation by Nebuchadnezzar, concerning a prophetic dream which Daniel had interpreted. This is followed by a statement of how it was fulfilled in his own life, and an exhortation to praise and honour God. There are, however, certain peculiarities which do not fit into such a purely personal application of the prophecy. These have led to the opinion that the story is, in fact, an allegorical prophecy about political and economic developments during a certain limited period of world history.

In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar had seen a tree that provided food and shelter for all; the beasts of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the air dwelt in its branches (v. 10-12). Then, by divine decree, the tree was cut down, leaving only a stump in the earth, and "seven times" were to pass over it (v. 14-17). Daniel explained that the tree represented the king, Nebuchadnezzar, under whose rule all people and nations prospered. When the tree was cut down, this signified that the king would become insane for a period of "seven times", during which he would behave like a beast, and eat grass like an ox (v. 20-25). All this, we are told, took place, and at the end of the set period Nebuchadnezzar returned to his right mind, and his kingdom was restored to him. We have no historical confirmation that this actually happened, but documents for the whole of Nebuchadnezzar's reign are not available. It is by no means impossible, for such a form of insanity, called lycanthropy, is known.

This explanation of the dream is nevertheless not entirely satisfactory. One feature, in particular, is left unexplained, namely that

the stump of the tree was to be left "with a band of iron and bronze" (v. 15 and 23). A second peculiarity is the mysterious term used in regard to the time factor, namely seven *times*, which is usually taken to mean years. But if that is what was meant, why does the prophecy not say seven years instead of seven times? There must be a reason for using a different word. As we shall see, there is scriptural evidence for believing that a "time" in the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation is a period of three hundred and sixty days, but this still does not provide a satisfactory reason why a unit, differing by only five days from a solar year, should necessarily be employed in this particular prophecy. It seems quite unimportant whether Nebuchadnezzar's lunacy lasted a full seven years, or a few weeks less.

In view of these peculiarities, many writers since about 1820 have regarded the prophecy as allegorical. Dr. C. H. H. Wright, for example, wrote, "The madness of Nebuchadnezzar (ch. iv) was not merely a striking incident in the history of the king, but an allegorical picture of the world-power as 'beside itself' owing to its estrangement from God. The 'seven times' may represent not only the seven years of the king's insanity, but the great prophetic 'seven times' which span the period between the overthrow of the Jewish theocracy by the Babylonian monarch and the day when the Messiah shall be revealed as King of kings and Lord of lords."¹

The representation of a dominant world-power as a great tree is also to be found in Ezekiel, chapter 31, where a cedar tree represents either Assyria (v. 2-3, AV and NEB), or more probably Egypt (RSV). The parallel with Daniel is quite remarkable in that the top of the cedar was in the clouds (compare Ezekiel 31: 3 and 10 with Daniel 4: 11 and 20), and "all the birds of the air made their nests in its boughs; under its branches all the beasts of the field brought forth their young; and under its shadow dwelt all great nations" (Ezek. 31: 6, cf. Dan. 4: 12). Just as Nebuchadnezzar's tree was cut down leaving only a stump, so with Ezekiel's cedar "Foreigners, the most terrible of nations, will cut it down and leave it. On the mountains and in all the valleys its branches will fall, and its boughs will be broken in all the watercourses of the land; and all the peoples of the earth will go from its shadow, and leave it" (Ezek. 31: 12, cf. Dan. 4: 14).

¹ C. H. H. Wright, *Daniel and his Prophecies* (1906), p. 149.

Now Ezekiel's prophecy clearly alludes to the overthrow of Egypt by "the most terrible of the nations" which is identified as Babylon in Ezekiel 30: 10-11: "I will put an end to the wealth of Egypt by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He and his people with him, the most terrible of the nations, shall be brought in to destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with slain." This prophecy against Egypt began to be fulfilled in 605 B.C., when the Egyptians were defeated at Carchemish, and was completed when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt some thirty-five years later.

Ever since the Israelites had occupied the promised land, they had looked to Egypt for help and protection. Following the downfall of Assyria, Babylon next displaced Egypt as the world's greatest power, and took over the role of the great tree. Therefore Daniel was able to say to Nebuchadnezzar, "The tree you saw . . . it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong" (4: 20-22). But the remarkable thing is that the tree was immediately hewn down, the birds and beasts were told to get away from under it, and only its stump, bound with a band of iron and bronze, was left standing in the grass, while a period of "seven times" passed over it. We now have to consider what the prophetic significance of all this may be.

The tree evidently represents world government, at first in the benevolent hands of Egypt, but later in the hands of Babylon. Immediately the tree was cut down, and no longer provided shelter for the weaker nations. The band of iron and bronze may be interpreted from the symbolism of chapter 2 as signifying that world power would be in the hands of governments like those in the Roman and Greek empires, that is some sort of constitutionally restricted monarchy, rather than the autocratic dictatorships of Babylon and Medo-Persia. This state of affairs was to last for a limited period of time, stated to be "seven times".

Of greater interest and importance, however, is the madness from which the world-power, represented by Nebuchadnezzar, was to suffer. It was to be of a particular nature described several times in the course of Daniel's prophecy. In the vision, the sentence passed on the tree was, "Let his lot be with the beasts in the grass of the earth; let his mind be changed from a man's, and let a beast's mind be given to him" (4: 15-16). Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar that this meant "You shall be made to eat grass like an ox" (v. 25).

Again, just before he went mad, Nebuchadnezzar heard a voice from heaven saying, "You shall be made to eat grass like an ox" (v. 32) and finally in the description of his ailment we are told "he was driven from among men, and ate grass like an ox" (v. 33).

The same transformation from man to beast is brought to our notice in chapter 7, Daniel's next prophecy relating to the series of four Gentile empires. In contrast to chapter 2, where these kingdoms had been symbolised by a human image, they are there represented as four beasts. It appears, therefore, to be of some importance to look more carefully into the meaning of this symbolic transformation. The fundamental nature of this change is from a tree to a beast, that is, a transition from the vegetable to the animal kingdom. Now the essential difference between vegetable and animal life is that plants derive their food directly from the soil and the sun, whereas animals feed either on vegetation, or on other animals that have ultimately obtained their food from plant life, of which grass is the most common source. This provides the clue to the transformation that took place in Nebuchadnezzar's behaviour, namely from that of a tree into that of a beast that ate grass.

Now grass, in prophetic symbolism, represents the great mass of ordinary working people who are ultimately those who produce wealth. "All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field," wrote Isaiah (40: 6), and in the next verse he repeats, "Surely the people is grass." Nebuchadnezzar's peculiar behaviour in eating grass symbolised the changed character of his empire; it was to be no longer like former empires, acting as benevolent protectors of smaller nations, but a predatory power, feeding on the common people. This, as we shall see, is what all the great Gentile empires of the world became, Babylon being typical of those that followed. Each was founded and established by military conquests whose main objective was to plunder, rob, and hold to ransom, the people of the weaker nations. They were subsequently maintained by the systematic collection of annual tribute or taxes, levied ultimately on the common people.

Babylon was not, of course, the first empire to exact tribute; the Assyrians and Egyptians are on record as having from time to time acted in a similar manner, but it would appear from biblical examples that this usually consisted only of a single payment, rather than an annual levy. Menahem gave Tiglath-pileser a single payment of a thousand talents of silver as a price for his freedom

(2 Kings 15: 19); Sennacherib demanded of Hezekiah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold (2 Kings 18: 14). Similarly Pharaoh Neco required of Jehoiakim a single payment of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold (2 Kings 23: 33). But Nebuchadnezzar demanded an annual tribute, and when Jehoiakim ceased to make these contributions, he came and threatened Jerusalem, and collected the arrears.²

It need hardly be said that conquered kings did not pay tribute out of their private resources; they collected the money in the form of taxes from their subjects, represented by grass in Daniel's prophecy. Thus "Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is from all the wealthy men" (2 Kings 15: 20), and "Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money according to the command of Pharaoh. He exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Neco" (2 Kings 23: 35). If this was done in the case of single payments, we may be sure that the annual tribute demanded by Nebuchadnezzar was raised in a similar manner from the people of the land. Thus Nebuchadnezzar's policy created no wealth, but consumed the wealth created by the people who toiled on the land in the countries he subjugated. In the symbolism of the prophecy he was behaving like an ox that ate grass.

The Age of Predacious Empires

Jeremiah gave a final warning in 604 B.C. that Judah and the surrounding nations were about to undergo punishment by war (25: 15-19). He had been predicting the same thing about Jerusalem for twenty-three years (25: 3), and on an earlier occasion had employed the symbolism of an attack by wild beasts: "Therefore a lion from the forest shall slay them, a wolf from the desert shall destroy them. A leopard is watching against their cities, every one who goes out of them shall be torn to pieces; because their transgressions are many, and their apostacies are great" (5: 6). We may, therefore, conclude that Daniel's series of empires, of which Babylon was typical, were in particular those to which the Jews became subject, and which have since ruled over Jerusalem and the Holy Land until recent times.

² 1 Kings 24: 1; Josephus, *Antiquities* X, vi, 1-2 (87-88).

In chapter 2 it was predicted that there were to be four great empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, followed by a fifth period when world power was to be divided, after which the kingdom of God is finally to be established. History confirms that these four empires did, in fact, subjugate the Jews and incorporate their land within their boundaries. Furthermore, after the fall of the fourth empire, Rome, two great Gentile religious powers have dominated the world, namely the Papacy in the west, and Islam under the Caliphs in the east. When we come to chapters 7 and 8 of Daniel, it will be shown that in prophetic symbolism these two powers are depicted as little horns growing out of the beasts that represented the Roman and Greek empires.

There is, therefore, justification for believing that the prophecy of the great tree covers all five sections of Daniel's metallic image, including the period following the fall of Rome, and extending until the present century when the Moslem Caliphate was abolished. Let us, then, examine the economic policies of the great world powers down through the ages, and observe how the prophecy has been fulfilled as each followed the crazy example of Babylon.

Medo-Persia

Cyrus, king of Persia, conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., and at first it looked as if he would behave like a sheltering tree, for in the first year of his reign he issued a decree permitting the Jews to return to their native land and rebuild their temple. His successor, Darius the Great, however, organised his empire in twenty provinces, imposing on each a fixed annual tribute based on a measure of their size and fertility. Over these provinces he appointed rulers, called satraps, whose responsibility it was to raise the specified amount and remit it to the royal treasury. The Greek historian Herodotus has preserved for us a list of these provinces and the amount of money each was required to pay annually, the total being equivalent to 14,560 talents of silver, worth something like a hundred million pounds sterling in modern money. Besides this there were contributions in kind, such as fifteen hundred horses, fifty thousand sheep, and two thousand mules exacted annually from Cappadocia. In addition certain countries had to provide for occupation forces, Egypt, for example, supplying 120,000 bushels of corn to the Persian troops stationed there.³ Finally, after com-

³ CAH IV, p. 198 ff.; Herodotus III, 90-95 (Penguin, p. 214 f.).

pleting his list of provinces with the amounts each had to pay, Herodotus adds, "The one country I have not mentioned as paying taxes is Persia herself—for the simple reason that she does not pay any!"⁴ Thus the empire consumed the wealth of other nations, but produced none itself.

The burden on the provincial population of raising all this money, regardless of whether there had been a poor harvest, may be seen in Nehemiah 5:3-5, where we are told that many of the Jews, at that time under Persian rule, had mortgaged their lands, vineyards and houses. Some had "borrowed money for the king's tax" on the security of their farms, while others had sold their children into slavery and could not redeem them, for they no longer possessed lands and vineyards.

Greece

The empire created by Alexander the Great could well be likened during his life-time to a carnivorous beast, for he acquired most of his wealth by plundering the Persian treasure-chests. After his death his empire was divided among his generals and their successors, the two most important being the Greek dynasties of the Seleucids in Syria, and the Ptolemies in Egypt. The Jews, lying between them, were subject first to one and then the other, but for a time the tax revenues were divided. According to an ancient Egyptian papyrus, enormous sums of money were collected annually from Phoenicia and Palestine.⁵ The collection was farmed out to the highest bidder, a system that was open to considerable abuse. For example, Josephus tells us that a certain Jew, named Joseph, attended an auction which had been so rigged by the professional tax collectors, that he was able to offer the king double the sum they had bid, and was still able to make a good profit from collecting a fair rate of tax from his own people over the next twenty-two years.⁶

Apart from these revenues, the Ptolemies claimed all the land of the Nile valley and the Delta as their private property by right of conquest. Consequently they were able to let it out and derive a vast income from it in rents. On the other hand, when public works needed to be carried out, this was done cheaply by levies of forced

⁴ Herodotus III, 97 (Penguin, p. 216).

⁵ CAH VII, p. 129 ff.

⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* XII, iv, 4-6 (175-186).

labour.⁷ Thus in the course of time, the Ptolemies were able to accumulate a fabulous horde of treasure.

Syria took control of Palestine after Egypt but, not content with the annual revenue from taxes, the Seleucids behaved like the Babylonians before them by plundering the temple. Seleucus IV attempted this when he sent his finance minister Heliodorus to carry off the money that people had deposited there for safe keeping, but he was frustrated by divine intervention (2 Macc. 3: 7-30). A few years later, in 169 B.C., Antiochus Epiphanes sent an army which entered the temple, "And carried off the golden altar, the lampstand with all its equipment, the table for the Bread of the Presence, the sacred cups and bowls, the golden censers, the curtains and the crowns. He stripped off all the gold plating from the temple front" (2 Macc. 1: 20-22). This king of Syria met his death in Persia while collecting overdue taxes, and plundering a rich city and pagan temple (1 Macc. 3: 31 and 6: 1-3).

Rome

After the Romans had defeated Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, in 191 and 189 B.C., they imposed on him a war indemnity of 15,000 talents of which 500 were to be paid at once, 1,500 on ratification of the peace treaty, and the remainder in twelve annual instalments.⁸ Thus Rome became the world's dominant predatory power. In 54 B.C., Crassus, on his way to a campaign against the Parthians, came to Jerusalem and carried off from the temple two thousand talents of sacred money, and all the gold he could lay hands on, amounting to a further eight thousand talents.⁹ All that remained of Judah's national treasures were carried off in A.D. 70 by the Roman armies that destroyed Jerusalem and burnt the temple.¹⁰ The greatest prize, however, was secured by Octavian who later became the emperor Augustus. In 30 B.C., he marched through Syria and Palestine into Egypt, and captured the fabulous treasures of the Ptolemies. So great was this sum of money that when it came on the market in Rome, it caused the standard rate of interest to fall from 12 to 4 per cent, and the price of land doubled almost overnight.¹¹

⁷ CAH VII, p. 27 f.

⁸ CAH VIII, p. 225.

⁹ Josephus, *Ant.* XIV, vii, 1 (105).

¹⁰ Josephus, *Jewish War* VII, v, 5 (132-152) (Penguin, p. 372).

¹¹ CAH X, p. 104 f.

As regards taxes, although the Romans recognised that direct taxation should be assessed according to annual income, they found that in practice the labour involved in settling the amount was too expensive. Consequently they resorted to the same method of collection as the Greeks, and farmed them out to private contractors. Thus "the direct taxes of Asia as a whole were to be put up for auction in Rome: the State would take the highest bid in lieu of the revenue, and the bidder would be authorised to recoup himself by collecting the taxes throughout the province."¹² But once again it was the subjugated provinces that bore the brunt of taxation, while in Italy the Romans enjoyed the fruit of other men's labour. "What distinguished a province from Italy was that its inhabitants, with the exception of those who had been definitely granted exemption, were liable to direct taxation. . . . It cannot be denied that the extension of the empire brought considerable financial advantages to the inhabitants of Italy, who in the later days of the Republic were extremely lightly taxed."¹³ Under the emperors the collection of taxes was reorganised, and a fresh assessment was made on each family. The publicans that we read of in the New Testament were the wealthy tax-gatherers who paid a rent to the State for the right to collect these revenues for their own profit.

Another way in which the Romans exploited the labour of the common people was in the matter of slaves. These were among the spoils of war that were brought back from the countries they conquered. "The slaves consisted, for the most part, of barbarian captives, taken in thousands by the chance of war," wrote Gibbon,¹⁴ and to illustrate how numerous they were, he said that "It was once proposed to discriminate the slaves by a peculiar habit; but it was justly apprehended that there might be some danger in acquainting them with their own number."¹⁵ After quoting several instances where four hundred or more slaves were employed on a single estate, Gibbon estimated that "the slaves were at least equal in number to the free inhabitants of the Roman world,"¹⁶ and this has been confirmed by more recent investigations.¹⁷

¹² CAH IX, p. 64 f.

¹³ CAH IX, p. 467.

¹⁴ Gibbon I, p. 39.

¹⁵ Gibbon I, p. 41.

¹⁶ Gibbon I, p. 42.

¹⁷ Gibbon III, p. 238, n. 2.

The Papacy

The Holy Land was taken from the Romans in the seventh century by the Moslem Arabs known as Saracens. After them came the Seljuk Turks in 1071, but between 1099 and 1187 Jerusalem was held by the Crusaders who captured it on behalf of the Roman church. By that time the Papacy had acquired a powerful political empire in Europe by means that were as effective, if not as brutal, as those employed by earlier imperialists. Nor were the popes less avaricious or cunning when it came to collecting money which now came ultimately from the pockets of Christian people.

For example King John, after a quarrel with Pope Innocent III, was excommunicated from the Church, and the Pope offered the king of France remission of all his sins, and those of all that went with him, if he would invade England and remove John from the throne.¹⁸ Thus John was forced to surrender his kingdom of England and lordship of Ireland to the Pope, but was allowed to receive them back on feudal terms, if he bound himself and his successors to pay annually seven hundred marks for the one and three hundred marks for the other, and take an oath of fealty as a tenant to the Pope.¹⁹ In consequence it is recorded that "throughout the long reign of Henry III, England was held by successive popes as a province of the Papal territory. . . . England was the great tributary province, in which the Papal avarice levied the most enormous sums, and drained the wealth of the country by direct or indirect taxation."²⁰

At that time Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) was offering benefices, that is rights to ecclesiastical revenues in England, as rewards to those citizens of Rome who would render him assistance. In fact he wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury demanding "that provision be made for three hundred Romans in the chiefest and best benefices in all England at the next voidance."²¹ Many of these Romans drew their incomes, but never set foot in their parishes. Regarding those that did come to this country John Foxe commented: "Such was the insatiable avarice of these Roman rakehells, prolling and polling wheresoever they came, with their provisions and exactions out of measure, and never satisfied; insomuch

¹⁸ John Fox, *Acts and Monuments* II (R.T.S. edn., 1877), p. 329.

¹⁹ CMH VI, p. 555; Milman V, p. 284 f.

²⁰ Milman VI, p. 83.

²¹ *Acts & Mon.* II, p. 367.

that here in England, whosoever lacked, their barns were always full of corn; and what penury soever pinched the people, they were sure to have enough. And these importunate exactions and contributions of these Italian harpies, besides the Peterpence, besides the common tribute, daily more and more increased, to the grievance of the realm, insomuch that the wealth of this land was almost clean sucked up, and translated to the court of Rome."²²

Again, it is notorious that the Popes of Avignon collected enormous sums of money in taxes from the clergy: "In the fourteenth century, it was impossible for a power even of an essentially spiritual character to dominate the world unless wealth supplied the driving force for its activities. This the Popes of Avignon acquired by creating or developing a vast fiscal system, designed to secure to them considerable pecuniary resources. . . . While the number and the variety of the papal taxes constituted a heavy burden for the clergy, the nature and methods of their collection made them still more odious. No limitation of time could wipe out the debts of the taxpayers. Whether due from personal or from real property, they remained a charge on the benefice, however old they might be. . . . The methods employed in exerting pressure so as to hasten payment of taxes and overcome resistance combined to make the papal treasury universally execrated."²³

The Moslems

Immediately after the death of Mohammed in A.D. 632, the Saracens, or militant Moslem Arabs, under their leaders the Caliphs, embarked on a series of military expeditions after the manner of the earlier Gentile empires. Within less than a century, the Saracen conquests had established a vast Moslem empire extending from central Asia and India to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. As the historian Gibbon declared, "The caliphs were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe."²⁴ Although ostensibly a religious movement, the essentially predacious character of their conquests was apparent from the start. In the first year of the first caliph, a tribe of sedentary Arabs west of the Euphrates was subjugated, and "the caliph accepted as the first-fruits of foreign conquest an annual tribute of seventy thousand pieces of gold," and "spoils infinite and

²² *Acts & Mon.* II, p. 393.

²³ CMH VII, p. 279 f.

²⁴ Gibbon V, p. 384.

innumerable were acquired by the victorious Moslems."²⁵ Soon afterwards, their armies defeated the Persians, and, raiding the king's palace, "the naked robbers of the desert were suddenly enriched beyond the measure of their hope or knowledge. Each chamber revealed a new treasure secreted with art, or ostentatiously displayed; the gold and silver, the various wardrobes and precious furniture, surpassed the estimate of fancy or numbers."²⁶

During the next hundred years, the Saracens overran all north Africa, and established themselves in Spain. In A.D. 713, a treaty of peace was signed under which Theodemir, prince of the Goths who ruled the country at that time, was forced to pay an annual tribute of one piece of gold, and a specified quantity of farm produce, for each of his subjects.²⁷ Not long after this, the first of the Ommayyad dynasty offered peace and protection to Christians in Spain on payment of ten thousand ounces of gold, ten thousand pounds of silver, ten thousand horses, as many mules, one thousand swords with an equal number of helmets and lances. The most powerful of his successors derived from the same kingdom an annual tribute of over twelve million pieces of gold, "a sum which in the tenth century most probably surpassed the united revenues of the Christian monarchs," wrote Gibbon.²⁸

History records that from the beginning "the Muslims did not pay taxes; but merely tithes—a tenth of the produce of their lands. On the contrary, the income of the lands conquered was divided among them in the shape of pensions. As long as the conquests were going on, the spoil was great and the pensions comparatively few; and this arrangement worked very well."²⁹ But the Muslims did not like to admit to paying even tithes, so a hundred years later the tithe "was said by a legal fiction to be paid by the land, and so both Muslims and non-Muslims were liable for it." In addition, however, there was a poll-tax, "payable only by non-Muslims in return for the protection afforded them by the Muslims."³⁰ Thus the Muslims pursued the same policy as the earlier predacious empires, feeding on the wealth produced by others, collecting this

²⁵ Gibbon V, p. 299.

²⁶ Gibbon, V, p. 302.

²⁷ Gibbon V, p. 372.

²⁸ Gibbon V, p. 376.

²⁹ W. Muir, *The Caliphate* (revised edn., 1915), p. 124.

³⁰ W. Muir, op. cit., p. 374.

by taxes on the common people, mainly Christians and Jews, whom they had subjugated.

Following the disintegration of the Saracen empire, the Caliphate was transferred to the Sultan of Turkey. Orchan, one of the earlier sultans (1326-1359) had instituted a particularly obnoxious form of tribute in order to maintain the strength of his army. He "selected out of the families of the Christians whom he had conquered a thousand of the finest boys. In the next year a thousand more were taken, and this annual enrolment of a thousand Christian children was continued for three centuries until the reign of Mahomet IV in 1648."³¹ The soldiers thus recruited were called Janissaries, and although the corps was later recruited from children of Janissaries, and included some native Turks, this army of enslaved people continued in being until 1826.

The Papacy and the Caliphate are thus seen to be the two great powers which, during the Christian era, carried on the predatory traditions of the ancient Gentile empires. As Grattan Guinness wrote nearly a century ago regarding Daniel's prophecies, "Two politico-religious powers or dynasties, symbolised as 'little horns', are represented as rising up and wielding supremacy among these kingdoms; these little horns—the Papal and Mohammedan powers—constitute therefore the last leading phase of Gentile power contemplated in the prophecy."³²

The Time Period

The economic policy of imperial powers which has been followed since the time of Daniel has evidently undergone a radical change during the present century. No longer do central governments draw tax revenues from subjugated peoples under their imperial control. On the contrary, we now see the great powers such as Britain, the United States of America, and even Russia, providing massive financial aid to what are now regarded as the underdeveloped countries. Let us, therefore, examine the time factor laid down in Daniel's prophecy, and see how it applies to the age of predacious empires.

In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the duration of his madness was given as "seven times"—"Let seven times pass over him" (v. 16,

³¹ E. S. Creasy, *History of the Ottoman Turks* (1877), p. 14.

³² H. Grattan Guinness, *Approaching End of the Age* (10th edn., 1886), p. 355.

23, and 25). In the Books of Daniel and Revelation, which both employ an identical set of symbols, a prophetic "time" is found to be a period of three hundred and sixty days. This follows from a comparison of verses 6 and 14 of Revelation chapter 12. In verse 6 we read, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days." In verse 14 we are told that the woman was given two wings "that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time." The latter period is evidently the same as the twelve hundred and sixty days in verse 6. The Aramaic equivalent for this period in Daniel 7:25 uses the dual plural for "times", hence the RSV translation, "a time, two times, and half a time." Equating this with the twelve hundred and sixty days of Revelation 12:6, we find that a "time" must be three hundred and sixty days.

This has been known to students of prophecy since the earliest days of the Christian church, and the period in Daniel 7:25 was reckoned to be twelve hundred and sixty days, or roughly three-and-a-half years. But it has long been pointed out by the historicist school of interpretation that in the Books of Daniel and Revelation a day in time prophecies symbolises a year in their historical fulfilment. If, therefore, we take Nebuchadnezzar's madness to be an allegorical picture of the whole age of predacious empires, then the "seven times" must signify a period of two thousand five hundred and twenty years. Even on a rough estimate this would appear to make sense, for the period began with the rise of Nebuchadnezzar about 600 B.C., and seems to have ended soon after the First World War about A.D. 1920. Let us, therefore, examine the history of the rise of the first, and the fall of the last of these predacious empires with a view to establishing exact dates.

The Rise of Babylon

Internal strife within the Assyrian empire led to Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar, establishing himself as an independent king in Babylon in 626 B.C.³³ With the help of the Medes and others, he progressively strengthened his position until in 612 he captured the Assyrian capital Nineveh.³⁴ The Assyrian king retreated to

³³ CCK, p. 7.

³⁴ CCK, p. 17, 59.

Harran in the west, where he was finally defeated in 609 B.C.³⁵ Egypt still remained as contender for supreme world power. In 609 an Egyptian army under Pharaoh Neco had marched through Palestine to the assistance of the Assyrians,³⁶ on which occasion Josiah, king of Judah, opposed him, and in consequence lost his life (2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron. 35:20-24). This was the first clash between Babylon and Egypt, and the Egyptians were forced to withdraw.

In 605 B.C. another Egyptian army was routed at Carchemish on the Euphrates by Nebuchadnezzar,³⁷ who succeeded his father as king in the same year. In pursuit of the fleeing Egyptians, the Babylonians overran Syria and Palestine, at which time Daniel was taken hostage to Babylon. But it was not until Nebuchadnezzar returned in the following year, that all the kings of the Mediterranean lands submitted to him.³⁸

Babylonian sovereignty, however, was not finally established, for the Bible tells us that Jehoiakim, king of Judah, served Nebuchadnezzar only three years, but then turned and rebelled against him (2 Kings 24:1). This rebellion probably coincided with the defeat of Nebuchadnezzar when he invaded Egypt at the end of 601 B.C.³⁹ Jehoiakim, having been placed on the throne by Pharaoh Neco in 609, originally owed allegiance to Egypt, and would have taken this opportunity to renew the connexion. When he died at the end of 598 B.C., he was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, who would likewise have owed allegiance to Egypt. But early in 597 Nebuchadnezzar again invaded Judah, and deposed Jehoiachin, putting Zedekiah, his uncle on the throne as his puppet king (2 Kings 24:17). This is also recorded in the *Babylonian Chronicle*, where the date is given as the second day of the month Adar (16 March, 597 B.C.).⁴⁰ From this date, therefore, may be reckoned the supremacy of Babylon over Egypt, at least so far as Palestine is concerned. Thus the rise of Babylon to supreme world power over against Egypt took place over the period from 609 to 597 B.C. Adding 2520 years to these dates brings us to 1912 to 1924.

³⁵ CCK, p. 17 ff., 63.

³⁶ CCK, p. 63.

³⁷ CCK, p. 67.

³⁸ CCK, p. 69, line 17.

³⁹ CCK, p. 30 f., 71.

⁴⁰ CCK, p. 33, 73.

The End of the Caliphate

As we have seen, the last of the predacious powers to hold Palestine was the Moslem Caliphate, an office finally held by the Sultan of Turkey. At the beginning of the present century the once mighty Turkish empire had long been in decline. It entered the final stage of its dissolution in 1912 with the cession in October of that year of its last remaining African possessions, Tripolitania and Cirenaica, to Italy. In the same year began the Balkan War which resulted in the loss of the greater part of Turkish territory in Europe. This was followed in the First World War by the loss of the Arab lands which had extended previously as far as the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

In all these countries, however, the Sultan-Caliph still retained a measure of control as the religious leader of all the Moslems. But in November 1922, Turkey became a republic and the Sultan abdicated, his cousin Abdul Mejid being elected Caliph in his place, but he was recognised as such only in Iraq, Transjordan, Syria and Palestine. Finally in March 1924, he was sent into exile and the caliphate was abolished altogether.⁴¹ This brought to an end the last predacious ruler to have jurisdiction in Palestine almost exactly 2520 years from the date in March, 597 B.C., when Zedekiah was appointed king by Nebuchadnezzar.

Rise of Babylon 609-597 B.C.	Fall of the Caliphate A.D. 1912-1924
(— — — — 2520 years — — — —)	

The Subjugation of Jerusalem

In His prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives, our Lord said, "Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21: 24). This suggests that the "seven times" of Daniel's prophecy has a particular application to the city of Jerusalem itself. Let us now examine the exact date and the circumstances in which Jerusalem came under Babylonian rule.

In Jeremiah, chapter 25, some important prophecies are recorded which he made in the spring or early summer of 604 B.C., the year after the battle of Carchemish. They are dated to the fourth year of

⁴¹ N. Bentwich, *Palestine* (1934) I, p. 183; *Cambridge History of Islam* (1970) I, p. 532 f.

Jehoiakim, which began in the autumn of 605 B.C., and to the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, which began in the spring of 604. First he declared that because the Jews had not mended their evil ways, Nebuchadnezzar would come and destroy both them and all the nations round about (Jer. 25: 1-10). Secondly he gave a list of nations which were to suffer from war, the first being Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (v. 15-25).

In consequence of these gloomy predictions, Jeremiah was forbidden to enter the temple, so he dictated his message to his scribe Baruch, who was to read it in public on a fast day when all the people were gathered in Jerusalem (Jer. 36: 1-6). For this purpose a special day was set in the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim (November/December, 604 B.C.). On that occasion the message was read first to all the people (Jer. 36: 10), a second time to the leaders of the nation (v. 12-15), and finally a third time to the king himself and his counsellors (v. 21). With a great show of contempt, Jehoiakim had it torn up and thrown on the fire page by page as soon as it was read (v. 23-25). Why, he asked, should the king of Babylon come and destroy his land?

Now the *Babylonian Chronicle* tells us that, after the battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar invaded Syria again in 604 B.C., and "marched about unopposed in the Hatti-territory until the month of Kislev," the ninth month. Then "all the kings of the Hatti-land came before him and he received their heavy tribute."⁴² The Hatti-land included both Syria and Palestine, so Jehoiakim must have been included. But this was in the very same month in which he had torn up Jeremiah's prophecy. Josephus explains that when the king of Babylon invaded his land, Jehoiakim neither shut the gates of Jerusalem, nor fought against him, but received him into the city, supposing that nothing terrible would happen to him.⁴³ No doubt this was because in the previous year he had suffered no further trouble after handing over some of the vessels of the house of God, and a few hostages, including Daniel (Daniel 1: 1-6). The *Babylonian Chronicle* says that in 604 B.C. only the king of Askelon offered resistance, probably hoping for help from Egypt, but "Nebuchadnezzar marched to the city of Askelon and captured it in the month of Kislev. He captured its king and plundered it, and

⁴² CCK, p. 69.

⁴³ Josephus, *Ant.* X, vi, 3 (96).

carried off spoil.”⁴⁴ Since this also took place in the ninth month, Kislev, and is recorded after the other kings had offered their tribute, we may conclude that Jerusalem surrendered about the middle of that month, that is early in December 604 B.C.

From that time until the First World War, Jerusalem remained in the hands of the predacious empires. At the end of October 1917, a combined British and Commonwealth force began to advance into Palestine from Egypt. Two days later, on November 2nd, it was announced in the famous Balfour Declaration that “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish Communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country.”⁴⁵

By December 9th, the position of the Turks in Jerusalem had become so precarious that they withdrew without fighting, and the city was handed over to the British troops.⁴⁶ Two days later, General Allenby, in command of the army of liberation, made his official entry into Jerusalem. This was almost exactly 2520 years after Jehoiakim had surrendered it to Nebuchadnezzar in December 604 B.C.

Jerusalem subjugated Dec. 604 B.C.	Jerusalem freed Dec. 1917
(— — — — 2520 years — — — —)	

Several nineteenth century exponents of the historicist interpretation of Daniel drew attention to the importance of the date 1917 long beforehand. Thus in America John A. Brown declared in the Preface to his book *The Even-Tide*, published in 1823, that “two thousand five hundred and twenty years, or ‘seven times’, or symbolical week of years, the period of the duration of the four tyrannical empires . . . commence 604 B.C., and terminate A.D. 1917,

⁴⁴ CCK, p. 69.

⁴⁵ Royal Institute of International Affairs: *Great Britain and Palestine* (1946), p. 8.

⁴⁶ A. P. Wavell, *Palestine Campaigns*, p. 166.

in the period of blessedness.”⁴⁷ What precisely he thought would happen in 1917 is not clear, but that is only to be expected, since Bible prophecy was not given for man to predict the future. Thus Grattan Guinness, writing in 1886, wisely remarked, “The secret things belong to God; it is not for us to say: but there can be no question that those who live to see this year 1917 will have reached one of the most important, perhaps *the* most momentous, of these terminal years of crisis.”⁴⁸

Other Applications

We have considered Daniel’s time period only as it has applied to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, but it is possible that it may have wider applications. Our economic system, for example, still has much in common with the principles of oppression and extortion operated by the old Babylonian empire. Most of us have to pay rates, an annual levy unrelated to income, fixed by local authorities. Trades unions hold the public to ransom by strikes to get higher wages which must ultimately be paid by the consumer in higher prices. In these and many other ways the present economic system is socially corrupt and morally indefensible. It will not be tolerated in the kingdom of God and is due to go swiftly. As the Book of Revelation declares, the industrial kings of the earth will cry, “Alas! alas! thou great city, thou mighty city Babylon! In one hour has thy judgement come” (Rev. 18:10). Then sanity will return to the earth, as it did to Nebuchadnezzar, and like him, men will “praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just” (Dan. 4:37).

⁴⁷ op. cit., p. xlii f.; cf. L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, vol. III, p. 405.

⁴⁸ H. Grattan Guinness, *Light for the Last Days* (1886), p. 346.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FALL OF BABYLON

The fifth chapter of Daniel tells the story of a great festival held in the royal palace on the night before Babylon fell. "King Belshazzar made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in front of the thousand. Belshazzar, when he tasted the wine, commanded that the vessels of gold and silver which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem be brought, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them" (5:1-2). These blasphemous revelries were suddenly cut short when "immediately the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace opposite the lampstand; and the king saw the hand as it wrote" (v. 5).

This apparition so terrified the king "that his limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together". He cried aloud to bring in the astrologers and soothsayers to explain the meaning of the writing, and promised that "Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom" (v. 7). When all his wise men had failed, the queen, who had hitherto been absent, came into the banqueting hall, and said, "There is in your kingdom a man in whom is the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar your father made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and astrologers. . . . Now let Daniel be called and he will show the interpretation" (v. 11-12). So Daniel was

called, and the king offered to clothe him with purple, put a chain of gold about his neck, and make him "the third ruler in the kingdom", if he could interpret the writing on the wall.

In his reply, Daniel first reminded the king that God had given his father Nebuchadnezzar a magnificent kingdom, but when he grew proud, he was deposed and became like a beast, eating grass like the oxen until he realised "that the Most High God rules the kingdom of men, and sets over it whom he will" (v. 21). He then went on to tell Belshazzar that he had not shown proper humility, but on the contrary had brought the vessels of the house of God and drunk wine in them along with his lords, his wives and concubines. Instead of glorifying God "in whose hands is your breath", he had praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood and stone (v. 23). Finally, Daniel read the writing on the wall as "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin", to which he gave the interpretation:

"Mene, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end;

Tekel, You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting;

Peres, Your kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (v. 25-28).

In the AV the last word in the inscription is given as Upharsin, which is made up of the Aramaic conjunction *U-* and *Pharsin*, the plural of *Paras*, meaning Persians. Since only the consonants were written in ancient Hebrew and Aramaic, the word *Paras* could also be read *Peres* which means divided, as in the RSV.

With a remarkable show of bravado, and possibly in scornful rejection of the prophecy, Belshazzar commanded that Daniel should be clothed with purple, receive a golden chain, and become the third ruler in the kingdom. But the chapter ends, "That very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom." No explanation is given of how this happened so suddenly.

1. Historical Background

The view has long been held in academic circles that the Book of Daniel is a fraudulent document written in the second century B.C., and that if anyone named Daniel existed among the Jewish captives in Babylon, he was not the author of the book named after him. In support of this view, it is alleged that the story of Belshaz-

zar's feast contains a number of serious errors which no contemporary writer would have committed. It is important, therefore, that before going on to consider its prophetic import, we should examine the evidence from secular history to see whether there is any substance in these allegations.

Until the nineteenth century, when the contemporary cuneiform records first came to light, the only accounts of the fall of Babylon were those of the Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon, and a passage quoted by Josephus from the Babylonian priest Berossus. These provide some further information, but none of them name Belshazzar as the last king of Babylon.

Herodotus tells us that a great queen, Nitocris, provisioned and fortified Babylon against attack by the Medes. Upstream from the city she constructed a series of water defences by diverting the Euphrates to make it "wind about with so many twists and turns that it now actually passes a certain Assyrian village called Ardericca three separate times."¹ Then some distance above Babylon, she had a basin dug for a huge lake into which the river could be diverted while in the city its banks were being lined with brick, and a bridge built over it. When Cyrus and his army attacked, they were at first unable to penetrate the city's defences, so they made use of this same basin to divert the river, and thus reduce the water level in the moat and river bed. The Babylonians were taken by surprise, says Herodotus, because "there was a festival going on, and even while the city was falling, they continued to dance and enjoy themselves."²

Xenophon's account adds further details: He agrees that the Euphrates was diverted on a night when the attackers heard that there was a festival in Babylon, in which all the Babylonians drank and revelled the whole night.³ The assault was led by two of Cyrus's generals who entered the palace and killed the king whom they found standing there with drawn sword. Shortly afterwards Cyrus himself made a triumphal entry into the city, and held a public reception.⁴

These accounts explain how it happened that Babylon fell so suddenly that Belshazzar was slain the same night. Herodotus

¹ Herodotus I, 185 (Penguin, p. 87).

² Herodotus I, 191 (Penguin, p. 91).

³ Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* VII, v, 15-25.

⁴ *op. cit.*, 33-37.

throws light on the apparent discrepancy that, whereas Belshazzar had been drinking with his wives and concubines during the feast (v. 2-3 and 23), the queen herself did not appear until after the magicians had failed to interpret the writing on the wall (v. 10). It is evident from the manner in which she addressed Belshazzar, that the queen was not his wife, but his mother, or possibly his grandmother. This woman of intelligence and character was probably the queen Nitocris, for Herodotus says that "the expedition of Cyrus was directed against her son who, like his father, was called Labynetus."⁵

This name Labynetus, found in Herodotus, needs explaining. The last king of Babylon was, in fact, named Nabonidus. It appears that a copyist must have read a defective N as Λ, the Greek capital *lamda* (L). Then if the *d* was converted into the similar sounding *t*, it would produce "Labonetus".

The account of Berossus, quoted by Josephus, says that Nabonidus, having been beaten in battle by Cyrus, fled to the city Borsippus. Then Cyrus, after taking Babylon, "marched away to Borsippus to besiege Nabonidus. But as Nabonidus did not sustain the siege, but delivered himself into his hands, he was at first kindly used by Cyrus, who gave him Carmania, as a place for him to inhabit, but sent him out of Babylonia. Accordingly, Nabonidus spent the rest of his time in that country and died there."⁶

There is nothing in all this that contradicts the Bible, except that Belshazzar is not mentioned. Consequently, many doubted his existence until 1854, when Sir Henry Rawlinson published the text of four clay cylinders in which the names of Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar occur. Taking this in conjunction with the story of Herodotus that Cyrus marched against Queen Nitocris's son who had inherited the sovereignty, it became evident to many that Belshazzar was co-regent with his father at the time when Babylon fell.⁷

Numerous other texts have since been discovered referring to "Belshazzar, son of the king", but the critics continued to argue that Daniel was wrong, and that Belshazzar was never king. However, in 1924 a further cuneiform text, known as the *Persian Verse Account*, came to light which revealed that Nabonidus, in the third

⁵ Herodotus I, 188 (Penguin, p. 89).

⁶ Josephus, *Contra Apion* I, 20.

⁷ E. B. Pusey, *Daniel the Prophet* (1868), p. 403, n.

year of his reign, 554 B.C., moved his residence to Tema, an oasis in the Arabian desert, and "entrusted the kingship" to his eldest son in Babylon.⁸ But H. H. Rowley still contended in 1930 that, because only those invested with kingship were qualified to celebrate the New Year festival, "it is certain that Belshazzar cannot have been similarly invested, since the New Year festival was in abeyance throughout the time of Nabonidus's absence from Babylon." "If he (Belshazzar) had been associated with his father on the throne," said Rowley, "the New Year Festival might have been celebrated as well with the one partner as with the other."⁹ This may be, but Rowley entirely ignores what is said in the *Persian Verse Account*, that when Nabonidus entrusted the kingship to his son, it was already his declared policy to suspend the festival. It records a speech of Nabonidus stating his intention to build a temple of Sin at Harran, adding that "Until I complete this, and finish the mourning, I shall omit the festival, I shall cause the New Year feast to cease."¹⁰ Under the circumstances, Belshazzar would naturally carry out his father's policy. His failure to celebrate the festival had nothing whatever to do with not being qualified.

Further light on this matter comes from another inscription discovered in 1956. This revealed that early in his reign Nabonidus had wished to restore the temple of the Moon-god at Harran, but this had led to a quarrel with the priests in Babylon who refused to obey him. Consequently, the king separated himself from a people whom he regarded as so sinful that a plague, which at that time afflicted them, was a punishment of the gods. It appears that ten years elapsed before he could bring himself to mingle with them again, and during this time his absence from the capital involved "a semi-abdication of royal power."¹¹ This fully explains how Belshazzar came to be regarded as king.

Reviewing the evidence already available in 1929, Prof. R. P. Dougherty, of Yale, wrote: "Of all the non-Babylonian records dealing with the situation at the close of the Neo-Babylonian empire, the fifth chapter of Daniel ranks next to cuneiform litera-

⁸ Sidney Smith, *Babylonian Historical Texts* (1924), p. 88, line 20; cf. R. P. Dougherty, *Nabonidus and Belshazzar*, p. 199, n. 663.

⁹ H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede* (1935), p. 15.

¹⁰ Sidney Smith, op. cit., p. 88, lines 10-11.

¹¹ C. J. Gadd in *Anatolian Studies VIII* (1958), p. 88.

ture in accuracy so far as outstanding events are concerned. The Scriptural account may be interpreted as excelling because it employs the name Belshazzar, and because it recognizes that a dual rulership existed in the kingdom."¹²

It is evident that the author of Daniel 5 was quite well aware of the precise status of Belshazzar in that he recorded the promise to make Daniel "the third ruler in the kingdom". It is evident that the king was offering the highest possible reward to anyone who could interpret the writing, and consequently the promise implies that Belshazzar himself was already the second in the kingdom after Nabonidus. As E. J. Young says, "It is a mark of accuracy such as would be almost inconceivable if the book of Daniel were a product of the 2nd century B.C."¹³ Dougherty likewise concludes that "the view that the fifth chapter of Daniel originated in the Maccabaeon age is discredited. . . . A narrative characterised by such an accurate perspective as Daniel 5 ought to be entitled to a place much nearer in time to the reliable documents which belong to the general epoch with which it deals."¹⁴

But if chapter 5 is considered to be a document contemporary with the fall of Babylon, the same must apply to other parts of the book, for this chapter cannot be divorced from the rest. For example, in verses 11 and 12 the queen quotes Nebuchadnezzar's words in chapter 4, verses 8 and 9, and uses the name Belteshazzar given to Daniel in chapter 1:7, 2:26 and 10:1, while Daniel himself in verses 20 and 21 also alludes to Nebuchadnezzar's period of madness described in the previous chapter.

The use of the name Belshazzar as the last king of Babylon is itself extremely damaging to the whole case that the book was written in the second century B.C., at a time when the very name Belshazzar seems to have been forgotten. Not only had Berossus a century earlier left no room for him, but the even earlier Greek historians had failed to record his name. According to all accounts available in the second century, the last king of Babylon was Nabonidus. A Jewish writer at that time, wishing to impress his readers that his book was an ancient document, would not have been so stupid as to introduce the obscure, or even unknown name of Belshazzar, even if he knew of it, but would have named Nabonidus who was generally regarded as the last king of Babylon.

¹² R. P. Dougherty, op. cit., p. 199 f.

¹³ *New Bible Commentary Revised*, I.V.F. (1970), p. 694.

¹⁴ R. P. Dougherty, op. cit., p. 200, n. 671.

2. Allegorical Interpretation

In chapter four, we saw that the prophecy of the great tree did not apply only to Nebuchadnezzar, but that it was an allegory applying to the whole series of Gentile empires. These empires had been portrayed in chapter two as a metallic image which was suddenly destroyed when a stone, representing the kingdom of God, smashed down on its feet. The feet denoted the disunited nations that were to follow the fourth empire. We now have, in chapter five, an account of the sudden and unexpected fall of Babylon in fulfilment of the prophecy written on the wall of Belshazzar's palace. Although there is no hint of an allegorical application here, there is in the Book of Revelation another prophecy of the fall of "Babylon the great" which must refer to a future event. We may well suppose that the story of the fall of ancient Babylon has an allegorical application to this same event. We have no means of confirming this except by comparing it with other prophecies relating to the end of the age.

The feasting and drinking by Belshazzar and his lords, just before the fall of ancient Babylon, has its counterpart in our Lord's prophecy: "As in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man" (Matt. 24:38-39). We may notice that Belshazzar called for the holy vessels plundered from the temple, so that he and his revellers could drink from them, after which they praised the gods of gold, silver, brass, and iron. This could foreshadow the modern contempt for the true faith, and the rejection of spiritual values in favour of the gods of money and worldly pleasures.

The fall of "Babylon the great" in Revelation 18 begins with an angel calling with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!" and then declares that the kings of the earth shall mourn, saying, "Alas! alas! thou great city, thou mighty city Babylon! In one hour is thy judgement come. And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo any more" (v. 10-11). Since the literal city of Babylon was destroyed long ago, there can be no question that "Babylon the great" must symbolise something yet to be destroyed. In conformity with our allegorical interpretation of Daniel 4, we may well assume it represents the whole system of Gentile world rule, symbolised in Daniel 2 as the metallic image which is to be destroyed before the kingdom of

God can be established. In particular, the prophecy appears to deal with the collapse of economic Babylon which we noticed in the previous chapter is still flourishing. Its end will be sudden, for we read in Revelation 18 that an angel threw a great stone into the sea, saying, "So shall Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and shall be found no more" (v. 21).

Now these prophecies in the Book of Revelation form part of a series in chapters 15 to 19 which lead up to the second coming of Christ to judge the world. In chapters 15 and 16 the final judgement of Babylon is summarised under the heading of the seven last plagues (15:1), which are poured out of the seven "bowls of the wrath of God" (16:1). It is interesting to notice that six of these have already been fulfilled, for "the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings of the east" (16:12). This evidently takes up the allegory of the fall of ancient Babylon when the Euphrates was diverted to open the way for the Medes from the east to enter and overthrow the city. In prophecy, empires are often symbolised by the principal rivers that flow through them. In ancient times the Euphrates symbolised Assyria and Babylon, but in the book of Revelation it denotes the Turkish empire through which it flowed.¹⁵ We have already witnessed the collapse of the Turkish empire during the last two centuries, symbolised as the drying up of the Euphrates.

3. The Writing on the Wall

With regard to the writing on the wall, it has been pointed out that "the inscription actually contains a string of weight names, viz. *mene*, *tekel* and *peres*, with the meaning mina, shekel and half-mina, the last-named word being documented in the Mishna and other Jewish writings";¹⁶ *peres* signifying the half-mina. Since a mina consisted of fifty shekels, and a shekel twenty gerahs,¹⁷ the total weight in gerahs signified by the writing was:

Mina	1000 gerahs
Mina	1000 gerahs
Shekel	20 gerahs
Half-mina	500 gerahs
<hr/>	
Total	2520 gerahs

¹⁵ B. F. C. Atkinson, *War with Satan*, p. 135.

¹⁶ N. W. Porteous, *Commentary on Daniel* (1965), p. 81.

¹⁷ *New English Bible*, p. 1165; cf. Leviticus 27:25, etc.

It can hardly be a coincidence that this figure is the same as the number of years denoted by the "seven times" of chapter 4. It may be premature to say what its significance may be, but it suggests that we are to reckon this same number of years from the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. to some event which is to take place in 1982. Time will tell.

CHAPTER SIX

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

The story of Daniel in the den of lions is placed in the reign of "Darius the Mede" who is said, at the end of chapter 5 to have "received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years of age." In the Hebrew this is included as part of the first verse of chapter 6, and is a matter that is best discussed in this chapter. This name, Darius the Mede, at once introduces a problem, because no one of that name is mentioned in any historical source outside the Bible. According to all classical history, as well as the contemporary cuneiform records, it was Cyrus, king of Persia, who conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., and succeeded to the kingdom. In consequence it has been alleged that "the claim of the book of Daniel to be a work of history, written by a well-informed contemporary, is shattered beyond repair by this fiction of Darius the Mede."¹

1. Darius the Mede

In view of the abundance of cuneiform records, including both historical accounts and dated business documents, there seems to be no room for Darius the Mede at all, unless this name is an alternative one for some known person. Various historical people have been suggested, such as Gubaru, or Ugbaru, who according to the *Nabonidus Chronicle*, led the final assault on Babylon, and was appointed governor by Cyrus. The chief difficulty here, as with most of the names suggested, is that he did not enjoy royal status, being only a governor, whereas Daniel 6 makes it clear that Darius the Mede was certainly a king.

¹ H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede* (1935), p. 59 f.

A view that has recently gained favour is that Darius the Mede was in fact Cyrus himself,² although the objection to this, both in secular history and the Bible, is that Cyrus is usually said to have been a Persian. This difficulty could be explained on the ground that in the Bible the term Mede was in early times used generally to include all Iranians, both Medes and Persians, the former having originally been the predominant tribe. For example, the Bible prophets who predicted the fall of Babylon (Isaiah 13: 17; 21: 2; Jeremiah 51: 11, 28) name only the Medes as the aggressors. In fact the Persians are not even mentioned in any book of the Bible written before the Babylonian exile. According to this view, the title Darius the Mede would signify only that Darius was an Iranian. A recently discovered text of Nabonidus from Harran appears to support this usage, in that it refers to Cyrus as "king of the Medes" in 546 B.C.³

A number of other factors can be adduced that suggest the identity of Darius the Mede with Cyrus:

(i) In Daniel 6 Darius is not only addressed throughout as king, but he finally issues a decree "to all the peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth" (v. 25). This he could not have done as governor of Babylonia, but only as supreme ruler of the Medo-Persian empire.

(ii) The parentage and early life of Cyrus is shrouded in mystery, the cuneiform sources indicating that his male ancestors were kings of the Persian province of Anshan, although the Greek historians suggest that his father was of humble origin.⁴ Herodotus says that his mother was named Mandane, daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes, and his father was named Cambyses, son of Cyrus.⁵ However, he confessed that he could give three versions of his history, all of which differed from the one he told,⁶ and certainly the accounts given by Xenophon and Ctesias differ in important details. Twice Herodotus says that Cyrus as a child was not called by that name,⁷ though he does not tell us what his earlier name was. It is possible that Darius was his name among the Medes, while he was known as Cyrus by the Persians.

² D. J. Wiseman, *Notes on Problems in the Book of Daniel* (1965), p. 12 ff.

³ D. J. Wiseman (1965), op. cit., p. 13; cf. C. J. Gadd in *Anatolian Studies* VIII (1958), p. 77.

⁴ H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede*, p. 30 f.

⁵ Herodotus I, 107 f. (Penguin, p. 57 f.).

⁶ Herodotus I, 95 (Penguin p. 53).

⁷ Herodotus I, 113, 114 (Penguin, p. 60 f.).

It has been pointed out by Wiseman that Daniel 6: 28 could be regarded as actually identifying Darius with Cyrus, since it could be translated "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, even (namely, or i.e.) the reign of Cyrus the Persian."⁸ He refers to a similar construction in 1 Chronicles 5: 26 which should read, "So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, even the spirit of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria," Pul being another name of Tiglath-pileser.

(iii) H. H. Rowley has pointed out that Cyrus was about sixty-two years of age at the time of his capture of Babylon. "Cicero preserves a tradition," he wrote, "that he lived to be seventy years old, having reigned thirty years in all. Since his death appears to have taken place in the ninth year of his reign, according to the Babylonian reckoning from the annexation of the Babylonian empire, . . . we should arrive at an age of sixty-one at the time of his overthrow of Nabonidus and Belshazzar."⁹ This is so close to the biblical sixty-two years of Darius the Mede, that either Darius and Cyrus have been confused, as Rowley thought, or they were actually the same person.

Although these factors do not amount to proof of identity, there is at least a sufficient degree of uncertainty for judgement to be suspended until more evidence comes to light. Rowley's verdict quoted above, that Daniel's image as a well-informed contemporary is shattered beyond repair, is quite unwarranted, particularly in view of the other evidence considered in the previous chapter.

2. Daniel in the Den of Lions

In chapter 6 we are told that Darius the Mede appointed a hundred and twenty princes, or satraps, to administer his kingdom, and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one. This administration appears to have covered the whole Medo-Persian empire, for in the following century, after further expansion, we learn in Esther 1: 1 that Ahasuerus (Xerxes) reigned from India to Ethiopia over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces. These provincial districts were evidently sub-divisions of the twenty regions established by Darius the Great for taxation purposes.

⁸ Wiseman (1965), p. 12.

⁹ H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede*, p. 55 f.

Because Daniel found favour with the king, the other presidents and satraps became jealous, and sought means to have him removed from office. They agreed, therefore, to request the king to make a decree that whoever made a petition to any god or man within thirty days, other than to the king himself, should be thrown into a den of lions, and they asked that this be put in writing so that "according to the law of the Medes and the Persians" it could not be altered or revoked. To this the king unwittingly agreed.

Daniel, however, continued to pray three times a day to his God, not openly, but privately in his own house. Nevertheless his enemies discovered him, and reported the matter to the king. The king was much distressed, and sought by all available means to save Daniel, but when his rulers pressed their case, he was obliged to accede to the Medo-Persian law, and issue the order for Daniel to be thrown to the lions. However, before retiring to his palace to spend the night in prayer and fasting, he said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" (v. 16). Early next morning the king rose and hurried to the den of lions, and called to Daniel who replied that God had shut the lions' mouths, and that he was unharmed. Orders were then given that Daniel should be released, and that those who had accused him were to be thrown to the lions, along with their wives and children. When this was done, the beasts at once tore them to pieces.

Following Daniel's miraculous deliverance, the king "wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth," that "in all my royal dominion men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring for ever, and his dominion shall be to the end" (v. 25-26).

3. Allegorical Interpretation

Although this story is not usually considered to have any prophetic significance, the opinion has recently been expressed that this chapter, like chapter 3, is parabolic, "and is a foreshadowing of the ultimate deliverance of the people of Israel from their persecutors."¹⁰ We have already seen that there are indications that chapter 3 has an allegorical application to the persecution and ultimate deliverance of the Christian church. Although the two chapters appear at first sight very similar in their spiritual import, there are

¹⁰ J. F. Walvoord, *Daniel, the Key to Prophetic Revelation* (1971), p. 144.

nevertheless a number of significant contrasting differences which suggest that they must apply to quite different historical circumstances.

(i) The principal characters in chapter 3 were Daniel's three companions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, whereas in chapter 6 Daniel is the persecuted hero who is ultimately delivered. We saw reason to believe that the three Jews in chapter 3 represented God's people, not only those of true faith among the Old Testament Israelites, but all the saints of the Christian church. Now Daniel differed from his companions in that he was the only one who received and passed on divine revelations. It was Daniel alone who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dreams in chapters 2 and 4, and Daniel who read the writing on the wall in chapter 5. As we shall see in the second half of the book, it was only Daniel who saw and interpreted prophetic visions. His three companions were doubtless servants of God, but they were not the channels through whom special revelations were made. This suggests that, whereas his companions represent the general body of the church, Daniel represents God's people Israel, through whom alone He chose to make known His written Word in the Bible, and thence to the rest of mankind.

(ii) The punishment meted out to the three Jews was that they should be thrown into a fiery furnace, whereas Daniel was thrown into a den of lions. The fiery furnace seems to be a fitting symbol for persecution, seeing that many of the martyrs were burnt at the stake. The same metaphor occurs in both the Old and the New Testaments: Isaiah promised that "when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you" (43: 2). Peter said, "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to try you" (1 Peter 4: 12, cf. 1: 17). The den of lions, on the other hand, suggests something of a different nature, and since wild beasts are used to symbolise political empires in chapters 7 and 8, the lions may well indicate the dangers of military aggression from which Israel suffered and from which prophecy tells us they will be miraculously delivered.

(iii) In chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar, on his own initiative, issued a decree that everyone should worship the golden image. In chapter 6 it was the governors and presidents of the provinces who, out of jealousy, took the initiative, and persuaded the king to make a decree.

(iv) In chapter 3 the king was Nebuchadnezzar who represented the Gentile rulers who persecuted the church during the times of

the Gentiles. In chapter 6 the king is Darius the Mede who overthrew the Babylonian empire and founded a new kingdom, that of Medo-Persia. If he can be identified with Cyrus, it was he who authorised the return of the Jews to their land, and the restoration of the temple. This suggests that the allegory might not be limited to the times of the Gentiles, but would find its ultimate application in a later period of history.

(v) In chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar was furious when he learned that the three Jews had refused to obey him, and ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual. The king in chapter 6, however, appeared to be more angry with himself, and did all in his power to save Daniel from being thrown to the lions.

(vi) In chapter 3 it was only the three Jews who had faith to believe that God could save them, but in chapter 6 the king himself declared that God could save Daniel, and prayed all night to that end.

(vii) The most significant difference between the two chapters is to be found in the king's decree with which each story ends. In chapter 3 Nebuchadnezzar issued what was little better than an edict of toleration, namely that, "Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way" (3: 29). The decree in chapter 6 goes much further, saying, "That in all my royal dominion men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God enduring for ever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end" (6: 26). In the present condition of the world, our rulers, at least in the west, appear to have allowed freedom to worship the true God, but nothing approaching a decree that all men shall tremble and fear before Him has yet been heard of.

In view of these clear points of difference, it seems unlikely that the two chapters can apply to the same people or the same circumstances. The indications are that chapter 6 refers to some future deliverance of the people of Israel as a result of which it will be universally recognised that the God of Daniel is the one and only true God. There are other unfulfilled prophecies in the Bible that speak of a deliverance and restoration of the people of Israel, Daniel himself providing one in chapter 12 which will be considered in due course. Furthermore, God has said in the Old

Testament that "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2: 14), and in the New Testament "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2: 10-11).

It is not the purpose of this book to explain how and when unfulfilled prophecies are to find their fulfilment. All we are concerned with here is to indicate that Daniel 6 can be interpreted allegorically in a manner that is consistent with many other prophecies in the Bible that are yet to be fulfilled. Forming, as it does, the last of a series of four allegorical prophecies, only the first two of which appear to have been fulfilled at present, this chapter may well be regarded as still awaiting a future application.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FOURTH BEAST

With chapter seven, we enter the second half of the Book which contains Daniel's visions of particular Gentile powers. Chapters 7 and 8 are symbolic prophecies in which the great empires are represented by beasts, and the lesser powers arising out of them by horns. Each chapter provides an interpretation explaining the symbols employed.

In the first of these visions Daniel saw "the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another" (v. 2-3). In the interpretation it is explained that "these four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth" (v. 17). It is evident that kingdoms rather than kings are meant, for later we are told that the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom (v. 23).

No explanation is given of the four winds stirring up the great sea, but since the four kings are said to arise "out of the earth", this suggests that the great sea represents the people of the whole world. In the Book of Revelation (17: 15) "many waters" symbolise "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues." In prophetic symbolism invasions are often referred to as winds, for example Jeremiah spoke of the impending Babylonian invasion of Judah as "a hot wind" (4: 11).

1. The Four Beasts

We have, then, a picture of invading armies giving rise to four great empires. It is natural to suppose that these are the same four empires described in Daniel 2. This is all the more reasonable since this prophecy is not particularly concerned with details of the first three, but concentrates on certain developments arising out of the

fourth empire. This is the view taken by most expositors, though there are other means of identifying the four empires symbolised by these four beasts.

Daniel tells us that the first three were like a lion, a bear, and a leopard, but he could not name the fourth beast which he described only as dreadful and terrible. Now Hosea had already foretold that the Lord would devastate Israel after the manner of four beasts: "I will be to them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk beside the way. I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will tear open their breast, and there I will devour them like a lion, as a wild beast would rend them" (13: 7-8). The last of these animals presumably corresponds with Daniel's unnamed beast. The four empires that subjugated the Jewish people in fulfilment of Hosea's prophecy were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, after which the Jews became dispersed throughout all the world.

The description given of each of the four beasts in Daniel's vision leads to the same conclusion.

Babylon

Daniel said, "The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings" (v. 4). Long previously Jeremiah had warned the Jews of the Babylonian enemy about to conquer not only them, but their Gentile neighbours as well, saying, "A lion has gone up from his thicket, a destroyer of nations has set out; he has gone forth from his place to make your land a waste; your cities will be ruins without inhabitant" (Jer. 4: 7, cf. 5: 6 and 50: 17). He also added "His horses are swifter than eagles" (4: 13). Habakkuk also said of the Chaldeans "They fly like an eagle swift to devour" (1: 8). The wings of the beast, like those of eagles, appear, therefore, to symbolise the speed of Nebuchadnezzar's conquests.

Daniel, however, goes on to say, "As I looked, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand upon two feet like a man; and the mind of a man was given to it" (v. 4). Babylon rose rapidly to power under its first two kings, Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar, who conquered Assyria, Palestine, Arabia and Egypt. But later kings took life more easily; Nabonidus, the last of them, retired to Tema, a pleasant oasis in Arabia, leaving his eldest son Belshazzar to represent him in Babylon.¹

¹ CAH III, p. 218 f.

Medo-Persia

The second beast was "like a bear" (v. 5). The bear-like character of the Medo-Persian empire may be recognised in the great size of its armies and their consequent ponderous movements. Thus when Xerxes wished to attack the Greeks, he required over four years to organise his mighty army, said by Herodotus to have numbered 1,700,000 men.²

Daniel goes on to say that this beast "had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, Arise, devour much flesh." The three ribs probably represent the three great powers that were conquered by the Medes and Persians, namely Lydia taken in 645, Babylon in 539, and Egypt in 525 B.C.

Greece

The third beast was "like a leopard with four wings of a bird on its back" (v. 6). The leopard is noted for its speed, and this feature is again signified in double measure by the four wings. Regarding Alexander the Great, founder of the Greek empire, history confirms that "his speed of movement was extraordinary. It is said that he attributed his military success to never putting anything off."³ After defeating the main Persian army at Arbela on the Tigris in 331 B.C., he pushed on to Persepolis so quickly that he captured the Persian national treasures before they had time to remove them.⁴ Meanwhile Darius, the Persian king, had fled. But when in the following year Alexander heard that he was mustering reinforcements, he marched against him with all speed, on one occasion covering fifty-two miles without a halt. As soon as he discovered where the king was, he pushed on again for two whole days with scarcely a rest, making the final fifty miles with his cavalry overnight across a desert, to pounce on his enemy as he lay dying, stabbed to death by his followers who had fled for their lives.⁵

Alexander's whole campaign lasted only eleven years, from 334 to 323 B.C., but in that short time he had conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, Babylonia and Persia, as well as vast Asian territories as far as India—a remarkable feat in those days.

² Herodotus VII, 60 (Penguin, p. 438)

³ CAH VI, p. 425.

⁴ CAH VI, p. 383.

⁵ CAH VI, p. 385 f.

This beast also "had four heads; and dominion was given to it." Most writers have taken the four heads to be the four parts into which Alexander's empire was divided after his death, and which are symbolised by four horns in the next chapter (Daniel 8: 8 and 22). But the prophecy indicates that the beast already had four heads when first described, that is to say before it rose to world supremacy under Alexander, and in prophecy heads always symbolise governments. In earlier times there were in Greece many small independent states which first became united under the threat of Persian invasion in 480 B.C. Following their victory over the Persians at Salamis, the union of Greek states was headed by four different states in succession, namely Athens (477-404 B.C.), Sparta (404-376), Thebes (371-362), and finally Macedonia after 360 B.C.⁶ The history of Greece may, therefore, be said to have begun with these four states that headed the Greek league, so that the prophetic symbol of a beast with four heads is very appropriate.

Rome

The fourth beast was "terrible and dreadful, and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth" (v. 7). The mention of iron links this beast with the iron legs of the image in Daniel 2 which represented the Roman empire. The iron teeth represent the Roman armies, and the allusion would be to the iron rule exercised by the various military governments. Although the government was nominally democratic, Gibbon tells us that without violating the constitution, "the general of the Roman armies might receive and exercise an authority almost despotic over the soldiers, the enemies, and the subjects of the republic."⁷ As an example he points to Pompey who "dethroned princes, divided kingdoms, founded colonies, and distributed the treasures of Mithridates. On his return to Rome, he obtained, by a single act of the senate and people, the universal ratification of all his proceedings. Such was the power over the soldiers, and over the enemies of Rome which was either granted to, or assumed by the generals of the republic."⁸

"It devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet" (v. 7 and 19). We have seen in chapter 2 how this was fulfilled when the Romans destroyed the last remains of Greek culture, burning their cities and carrying off their art treasures as

⁶ CAH, vol. VI.

⁷ Gibbon I, p. 61.

⁸ Gibbon I, p. 62.

spoils of war. The Romans dealt with all who opposed them in like manner, a further notorious example being their treatment of the Jews, both in A.D. 70, and again in 135.

2. The Fourth Beast

Before any attempt can be made to correlate the prophecy of the fourth beast with the history of the Roman empire, we must first notice that it is given in three sections:

- verses 7-14 An account of the vision
- verses 19-22 A summary of the vision
- verses 23-27 The Interpretation.

The original account lays down the sequence of events, but since both the summary and the interpretation introduce further details, it is necessary, in order to discover the sequence of events, to correlate the items from all three sections.

The first thing mentioned in the account of the vision is that the fourth beast had ten horns (v. 7). The interpretation says that "As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise" (v. 24). There is nothing to suggest that they "rule that empire", as the GNB implies. On the contrary, they exist simultaneously, for "there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots; and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (v. 8). This is followed by an interval denoted by the words "As I looked . . ." after which there followed a judgement by "One that was ancient of days" (v. 9-10).

Then Daniel says in verse 11, "I looked then because of the sound of the great words which the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire." So the beast was killed and its body destroyed only after the little horn had been heard bragging.

But the vision did not end with the destruction of the body of the beast, for Daniel continues, "As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time" (v. 12). This agrees with chapter 2 where, following the dominion of the four successive empires, there was a fifth period, represented by the feet of the image, during which world dominion was to be divided. Finally, after this period, Daniel goes on to say (7: 13), that "With the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man." Descriptions of the second coming of Christ

in the New Testament (Matt. 24: 30, 26: 64, Mark 13: 26, Acts 1: 9, Rev. 1: 7) are clearly based on this verse. Finally, "To him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away" (v. 14). This is evidently the stone kingdom which, in chapter 2, was to smash the image and fill the whole earth (2: 35, 44), and here is said to assume world dominion only after the second advent.

From this exposition it will be seen that the popular idea that the ten horns represent kings or kingdoms that are to arise only after the Roman empire has come to an end, cannot possibly be reconciled with the order of events laid down in the prophecy. Clearly the beast is said to have had ten horns at a relatively early stage in its history. Let us, therefore, review in broad outline the history of the rise and fall of the Roman empire with a view to discovering at what stage there were ten kings or kingdoms that could be represented by "ten horns that were on its head" (v. 20).

Roman History

Rome rose to the status of a leading world power in the second century before Christ. Some five hundred years later, the emperor Constantine (312-337) rebuilt Byzantium, establishing it in 330 as a new capital, and renaming it Constantinople. Then, after a short interval of unrest, the empire was divided in A.D. 364 into two parts, with the brothers Valens and Valentinian reigning as joint emperors in Constantinople and Rome. Not long after this, about the beginning of the fifth century, various barbarian hordes emanating from northern Europe started to invade Roman territory. The first groups were incorporated within the empire and granted land in western Europe and north Africa on condition that they provided troops in time of war. In 476, however, those who had settled in Italy revolted under their leader Odovacer, and forced the last western emperor to abdicate. After that the whole western sector of the empire became split up into a number of independent kingdoms.

The *Cambridge Mediaeval History* informs us that, in spite of this, the victory of Odovacer did not mean the total extinction of the western sector of the empire: "The absence of a separate emperor did not mean the abeyance of the Empire itself in the West. The empire had always been, and always continued to be one

and indivisible.” Thus even as late as the year 800, Charlemagne was crowned “Emperor of the Romans” in the west. Meanwhile, however, a Roman emperor continued to reign in Constantinople over the eastern sector which thus became the body of the empire, and this continued to flourish as the leading world power until 1071, when it was defeated by the Seljuk Turks. Even then the empire was not finally destroyed until attacked by the Ottoman Turks between 1350 and 1450, and Constantinople itself did not fall until 1453. After that, however, there can be no question that the Roman empire had ceased to exist.

It appears, therefore, that in the prophecy, the eastern, or Byzantine sector of the empire was represented by the body of the beast, while its head was in the west where the original seat of government had been located in Rome. Now, as we have seen above, verse 11 requires that the body was not to be destroyed until long after the ten horns and the subsequent little horn had arisen. It follows that we must look for the ten horns within the western sector long before the eastern empire fell.

As to the boundaries of the Roman empire, we may accept the impartial description provided by Gibbon: “On the west the Atlantic Ocean; the Rhine and the Danube on the north; the Euphrates on the east; and towards the south, the sandy deserts of Arabia and Africa.”¹⁰ The division between the eastern and western sectors lay on a line drawn southwards from Budapest along the middle Danube, and across the Mediterranean to the Sahara. The ten kingdoms must, therefore, be found west of this line. The only point of controversy relates to Britain. Gibbon calls it “the only accession which the Roman empire received during the first century of the Christian era,”¹¹ and it did not regain its freedom until Rome was sacked by the Goths about A.D. 410.¹² There seems to be more reason to include Britain south of Hadrian’s Wall, than to exclude it from the recognised territory of the western Roman empire.

3. The Ten Horns

In order to demonstrate that the prophecy of the ten horns was actually fulfilled during the years immediately following A.D. 476,

⁹ CMH IV, p. 431.

¹⁰ Gibbon I, p. 3.

¹¹ Gibbon I, p. 3.

¹² Bede, *Ecclesiastical History* I, xi.

it must be shown that there were neither more nor less than ten independent kingdoms within the recognised boundaries of the western empire. The following is a brief account of the origins and history of the various peoples who formed kingdoms in the western sector of the empire. The details may be verified in *The Cambridge Mediaeval History* (CMH), Vols. I and II.

(i) *Britain*. Britain had been a province of the Roman empire since the first century of the Christian era. At the beginning of the fifth century it was cut off from Rome, and Roman forces were withdrawn (CMH, I, 379-380). Nevertheless the country remained united from about 425 till 515 under Vortigern, Ambrosius and Arthur against the attacks of the Picts, Scots and Saxons. It must, therefore, be regarded as an independent kingdom when Rome fell in 476.

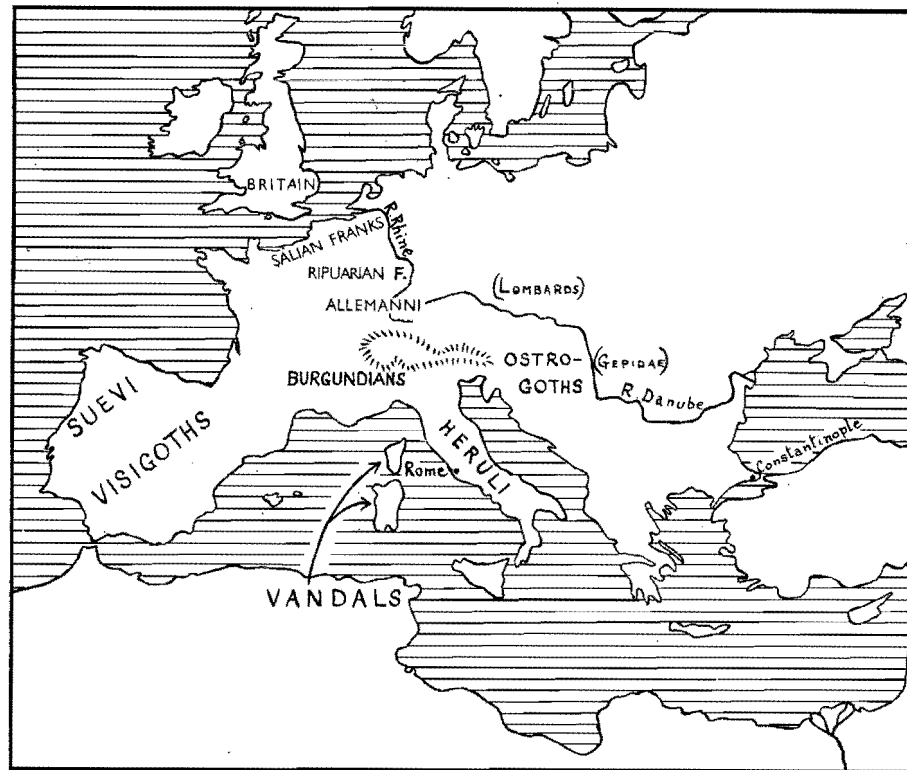
East German Group

(ii) The *Vandals*, coming south from the Baltic, were located about A.D. 400 east of the middle Danube along the River Theiss (CMH I, 264). Thence they migrated through central Europe to invade Italy in 405 (p. 265), but in 406 they crossed the Rhine into Gaul (p. 266). In 409 they passed through the Pyrenees into Spain (p. 304), finally crossing to north Africa about 425-429 (p. 305). In 476 the Vandal kingdom was officially recognised by the Roman emperor in Constantinople to include north Africa, the Balearic Islands, Corsica, Sardinia and Sicily (p. 311) all of which had originally been Roman territory.

(iii) The *Suevi* also come from east Germany, and accompanied the Vandals in their migrations, invading Gaul in 406 and Spain in 409 (CMH I, 304). In 465 they formed a separate kingdom in northwest Spain and Portugal (CMH II, 165) which still existed as an independent kingdom a century later.

(iv) The *Burgundians* originated in the Baltic region between the rivers Oder and Vistula, but about A.D. 285 they migrated to the river Main in west Germany (CMH I, 207). About 410 they followed the Vandals and Suevi across the Rhine into Gaul (p. 400-401), and formed an independent kingdom in 458 (p. 399). In 476 this kingdom, ruled by Gundobad and Godigisel, included the territory between the Rhone and the Alps (CMH II, 109).

The *Goths* claim to have come from Scandinavia before A.D. 250 to settle north of the Black Sea between the Don and the Lower



EUROPE, A.D. 476-508: showing the division of Roman Territory into ten kingdoms.

Danube (CMH I, 202-203). There they formed two kingdoms, the Ostrogoths in the east, and the Visigoths in the west. Between 370 and 375 they were invaded by the Huns from Asia, and were driven west.

(v) The *Visigoths* crossed the Danube into Roman territory in 376 (CMH I, 215). They invaded Thrace and attacked Constantinople (p. 257-260), later invading Italy and sacking Rome in 410 (p. 273). In 412 they entered Gaul (p. 274), settling in Bordeaux and Aquitania (p. 402), and in 415 invaded Spain (p. 278, 402-403). In 475, in a treaty with the emperor Nepos, their territory in Spain and Gaul, between the Loire, the Rhone and the Pyrenees, was confirmed (CMH II, 109, 159).

(vi) The *Ostrogoths*, on being driven out of Russia by the Huns, moved west up the Danube until they came into contact with the Vandals (CMH I, 254) with whom they crossed the Alps to invade Italy in 405 (p. 265). They obtained 4000 lbs. of gold from the Romans as a bribe, and were allowed to settle between the Danube and the Adriatic (p. 268-270) where they remained on Roman territory.

West German Group

The Franks included several tribes originally on the east bank of the Rhine north of the river Main. It is often overlooked that they were divided into two kingdoms, the Salian Franks adjacent to the North Sea, and the Riparian Franks further south.

(vii) The *Salian Franks* dwelt, at the beginning of the fifth century, between the rivers Meuse and Scheldt, but soon advanced westward to the Somme. Under Merovech in 451 they fought alongside the Romans against the Hun invaders, and under Childeric in 463 against the Visigoths (CMH I, 294, 299). Clovis, who succeeded him, conquered the kingdom of Syagrius in 486, and later most of northern France. About 508 he incorporated the Riparian Franks into his kingdom (CMH II, 109-116) which confirms that previously, since 476 at least, there had been two separate Frankish kingdoms.

(viii) The *Riparian Franks* comprised those Germanic tribes immediately north of the river Main. After crossing the Rhine at the end of the fourth century, they formed a kingdom ruled by Sigebert extending from Cologne and Aachen in the north to Metz in the south (CMH I, 299-300). Clovis eventually liquidated the Riparian kingdom about 508 (CMH II, 113-116).

(ix) The *Alemans* included a number of small tribes in western Germany south of the river Main (CMH I, 201, 294-295). These crossed the Rhine in 406 and conquered territory on the west bank (p. 266-267). In 476 they had occupied the area between the Rhine and the Vosges in addition to their territory east of the Rhine (CMH II, 110). They were attacked by the Franks under Clovis in 496 and again in 505-507 (CMH II, 112).

(x) *Odoacer*. Following the disintegration of the Hun empire on the middle Danube in 453, various tribes, such as the Gepidae, Rugii, Heruli and Sciri, became independent, and the Romans drew mercenaries from them for the defence of Italy. By 476 the immigrants into Italy had become very numerous, and demanded one

third of the land on which to settle. When their demand was rejected, they made Odovacer their king, and deposed the young emperor Romulus Augustulus. Odovacer thus established his own kingdom in Italy which remained until it was overthrown by Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths in 493 (CMH I, 430). Thus at the critical time following 476, the kingdom of Odovacer was one of the ten independent kingdoms in the western sector of the Roman empire.

Conclusion

The above synopsis of the migrations that took place in Europe during the fifth century reveals that during a period of about twelve years from 476 to 488, there existed on former Roman territory south of the Danube and west of the Rhine, ten kingdoms, namely, Britain, Vandals, Suevi, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Burgundians, Salian Franks, Ripuarian Franks, Alemans, and the kingdom of Odovacer. Various writers have included other kingdoms among the ten horns, but their lists usually apply to much later dates. No kingdom that came into existence in the western empire after the year 500 can legitimately be included.

4. Three Horns plucked up

We come now to consider the main feature of the prophecy, namely the little horn coming up among the others, "before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots" (v. 8). This description suggests that a power arose in the western sector of the empire which brought about the fall of three of the existing ten kingdoms at the end of the fifth century. Now every historian must allow that no history of Europe would be complete without some mention of the Papacy. For that reason alone, a prophecy that failed to mention this supremely influential power would rightly be condemned as worthless. What we have to enquire is, whether the historical facts about the rise of the Papacy fulfilled the prophecy of the little horn.

When the ten kingdoms became established in A.D. 476, the Christian church had no central government, and the bishop of Rome held no higher office than the bishops of Constantinople or Alexandria. Simplicius, bishop of Rome at that time, had submitted to the authority of Odovacer, barbarian king of Italy, and when he died in 483, Odovacer claimed the right to have a say in the

election of a successor.¹³ Half a century later, however, the emperor Justinian, celebrated for his codification of Roman law, made a decree that the bishop of Rome was to be head of all the churches;¹⁴ thus the legal foundation of the Papacy was laid at the very time required by Daniel's prophecy, and it sprang up as a politico-religious power among the ten secular kingdoms. As Daniel had foretold, "he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings" (v. 24). The three kingdoms that were overthrown were those of Odovacer, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths.

(i) Odovacer

Hostility between the Catholic church and the barbarian kingdoms arose because the latter had adopted the Arian heresy, denying the deity of Jesus Christ.¹⁵ Odovacer's claim to having a say in the election of the bishop of Rome naturally caused resentment, not only in Italy, but also with the emperor, for the official religion of the empire was orthodox Christianity. Consequently, when Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, demanded more land, the emperor Zeno found it convenient to send him to attack Odovacer.¹⁶ In 488 Theodoric crossed the frontier, and in the war that ensued, he was given every assistance by the Italian church. "Without asserting that Theodoric owed all his success to the church," says the *Cambridge Mediaeval History*, "the facts show pretty clearly that she afforded him—Arian though he was, like Odovacer—valuable assistance. It was Bishop Laurentius who opened for him the gates of Milan, and it was he who, after the treason of Tufa, held for him that important city; Epiphanius bishop of Pavia acted in similar fashion. In a letter written in 492 Pope Gelasius takes credit to himself for having resisted the orders of Odovacer, and finally it was another bishop, John of Ravenna, who induced Odovacer to treat."¹⁷

In February 493, through the agency of this bishop, a treaty was concluded between Odovacer and Theodoric under which the government of Italy was to be shared between the two kings, but a few days later Theodoric invited Odovacer and his chief of officers

¹³ CMH I, p. 436; Milman I, p. 301.

¹⁴ L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* I (1950), p. 931 ff.

¹⁵ Gibbon IV, p. 26.

¹⁶ CMH I, p. 438.

¹⁷ CMH I, p. 439.

to a banquet, and there massacred them. Thus the first kingdom was overthrown.¹⁸

(ii) *The Vandals*

Hostility between Arians and Catholics was most marked in the Vandal kingdom in north Africa. A succession of Vandal kings persecuted the Christian church mercilessly. Thousands were torn from their homes and driven into the desert to live among the Moors, while at home others endured torture such as the amputation of the ears, nose, tongue and the right hand.¹⁹ Thrasimund (498-523), says Gibbon, "instead of threats and tortures, employed the gentle, but efficacious powers of seduction. Wealth, dignity, and the royal favour were the liberal rewards of apostasy."²⁰ Hilderic (523-531) who succeeded him, was a catholic, and for a while permitted freedom of worship, and restored two hundred bishops to their churches, but then his cousin Gelimer, a zealous Arian, usurped the throne and put Hilderic in prison.²¹

Hilderic's clemency towards the African catholics had won him the favour of the emperor Justinian who resolved to deliver his Christian friend from prison. In September 533 he despatched an army to north Africa under Belisarius, who received assistance in the form of supplies from the catholic church, while the clergy "from motives of conscience and interest, assiduously laboured to promote the cause of the catholic emperor."²² Carthage was soon captured, but meanwhile Hilderic had been murdered. Gelimer escaped into the desert, but surrendered in the following year. Thus ended the second of the ten kingdoms, and Justinian "proceeded without delay to the full establishment of the catholic church" in north Africa.²³

(iii) *The Ostrogoths*

Meanwhile in Italy, Theodoric, Arian king of the Ostrogoths, had pursued a tolerant policy towards catholics,²⁴ but in 523 the emperor Justin, uncle and predecessor of Justinian, made the Arian

¹⁸ CMH I, p. 440.

¹⁹ Gibbon IV, p. 31.

²⁰ Gibbon IV, p. 28.

²¹ Gibbon IV, p. 210 f.

²² Gibbon IV, p. 220.

²³ Gibbon IV, p. 228.

²⁴ Gibbon IV, p. 135.

faith illegal throughout the empire.²⁵ Theodoric was thus forced to maintain his authority by political intrigue and bribery, so the conflict between Arians and catholics flared up again. Ten years later in 533, the emperor Justinian, wishing to secure the allegiance of the Italian catholics in his campaign against the Vandals in Africa, issued a decree declaring the bishop of Rome to be head of all catholic churches.²⁶ But Rome and the appointment of its bishops was still under the influence of the Arian Goths, so when Belisarius returned victorious from Africa, he was at once despatched to Italy to subdue the Ostrogoth rebels, and bring Rome once more within the empire.

Belisarius entered Rome unopposed in 536, but in the following year the Goths counterattacked, and for twelve months he was himself besieged in the city.²⁷ Nevertheless he carried out the secret orders of the emperor, or rather the empress Theodora, by deposing Silverius who had been made bishop of Rome by the Goths, and secured the election of Vigilius, the imperial nominee.²⁸ Then, early in 538, another Roman army arrived on the Adriatic coast, Belisarius was freed, and the Goths were driven north beyond the Po. They were, however, not vanquished, for three years later they recovered under a new leader Totila, who for eleven years defied the Romans and reconquered Italy.²⁹ Vigilius, the pope, with other catholics fled to Constantinople where they implored the emperor to resume the conquest and deliverance of Italy.³⁰ In 552-3 a great army under general Narses wiped out Totila and his Gothic armies, their kingdom disintegrated, and the people either became subject to the Romans or emigrated.³¹

Thus was the third of the ten kingdoms eradicated by the imperial power acting on behalf of the bishop of Rome. Italy, however, had still to be cleared of the Franks and Alemans. In the autumn of 554, Narses crushed these hordes, and peace was restored in the following year when the last of them capitulated.³² But in

²⁵ Gibbon IV, p. 139; CMH I, p. 453.

²⁶ L. E. Froom, *Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* I, p. 931 ff.

²⁷ CMH II, p. 15.

²⁸ Milman I, p. 431 f.

²⁹ CMH II, p. 16.

³⁰ Gibbon IV, p. 345.

³¹ CMH II, p. 17 f.; Gibbon IV, p. 347-353.

³² CMH II, p. 18; Gibbon IV, p. 355 ff.

contrast to the Ostrogoths, the kingdoms of the Franks and Alemans remained intact beyond the Alps.

5. The Little Horn

Daniel said that the little horn would be different from the earlier ones (v. 24), and that "in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man" (v. 8). The eyes suggest an overseer, and the Greek word *episcopos*, usually translated "bishop", actually means an overseer, and is so translated in Acts 20: 28. On these grounds there can be no objection to accepting the Papacy as the power referred to.

(a) *The Rise of the Little Horn*

An important point to notice about the little horn is that although at first it was little, later, when it began to boast, "it seemed greater than its fellows" (v. 20). The early weakness of the Papacy, during the first five or six centuries of its existence, is a point not often mentioned by those who identify it with the little horn. Although Justinian had made the bishop of Rome head of the Roman church, his attitude towards it was "frankly autocratic—he expected and exacted obedience." Thus on one occasion Pope Vigilius was hustled from Rome to Constantinople and forced to assent to an imperial command.³³ Other popes were treated in like manner. One, Pope Martin V, after enduring insult and imprisonment, was deposed and deported to the Crimea for his refusal to submit on a matter of faith.³⁴

In those days the popes were appointed by the emperor, if not always directly, at least under his influence. Without his permission they did not dare assume their throne; in fact, Roman law declared the election "incomplete and invalid until it had received the imperial sanction."³⁵

Following the Lombard conquest of northern Italy, the popes turned in the eighth century to the Franks for protection, and through them acquired territories extending north as far as the river Po. But although the pope was granted the honour of crowning Charlemagne and his successors "Emperor of the Romans", the Frankish emperors retained their right to exercise authority throughout Italy, and above all to allow no new pope to be elected

³³ CMH II, p. 689.

³⁴ CMH II, p. 690.

³⁵ CMH II, p. 686; Milman I, p. 446.

without their approval.³⁶ After the deposition of Charles the Fat in 887, Rome came under attack from the Saracens, and the popes were obliged to seek help from any available source so, as Gibbon observes, "Those who could appear with an army at the gates of Rome were crowned emperors in the Vatican."³⁷ In consequence, "the Papacy fell into the hands of the local aristocracy, and for more than half a century a family of native origin, that of a noble named Theophylact, a chief official in the papal palace, contrived to make and unmake Popes at his pleasure."³⁸ These included John XI (931-936), said to be the illegitimate son of Pope Sergius III (904-911) by Marozia, the daughter of Theophylact. Her grandson became Pope John XII at the age of sixteen,³⁹ and in his time (955-964), says Gibbon, "the Lateran palace was turned into a school for prostitution."⁴⁰

In 960 John XI appealed to Otto I, king of Germany, for military aid, and in February 962 Otto was crowned Roman emperor,⁴¹ and the Romans undertook never to elect a bishop save by the choice of Otto and his son. Although the pope remained the spiritual head of Christendom, "the arrangement was only workable because the Papacy was weak."⁴² From then until the middle of the eleventh century "the Kings of Germany and the Counts of Tusculum turn by turn set up popes, and thrice at least the lords of Tusculum themselves assumed the tiara."⁴³ These included Benedict IX (1032-1044) who became pope at the early age of twelve, but growing tired of the office he sold it for cash to his godfather, who took the name of Gregory VI.⁴⁴

Hitherto the Papacy had been a weak and degenerate power, but in 1075 Hildebrand, having made sure that his appointment under the title of Pope Gregory VII was valid, decreed that in future not only popes, but bishops and clergy were to be elected only by the church, and not appointed by any secular rulers.⁴⁵ When the

³⁶ CMH II, p. 5 f., and 6 162.

³⁷ Gibbon V, p. 189.

³⁸ CMH III, p. 454.

³⁹ CMH III, p. 455.

⁴⁰ Gibbon V, p. 195.

⁴¹ CMH III, p. 161 f.

⁴² CMH III, p. 164.

⁴³ CMH III, p. 454.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ CMH V, p. 64.

emperor Henry IV of Germany refused to submit to this, the pope declared him deprived of his kingdom and excommunicated him from the church. When Henry's subjects, from fear of similar excommunication, obtained absolution from the pope. Gregory, reluctant to allow Henry to retain his crown, kept the emperor in communication, would no longer recognise him unless he could clear himself, he hastened across the Alps in mid-winter to offer waiting outside in the cold for three days, bareheaded and barefooted, before he would revoke his excommunication. This he did only when Henry gave an oath acknowledging papal authority.⁴⁶

(b) *Speaking Great Things*

We notice next that the little horn had "a mouth speaking great things" (v. 8, 20). The great things spoken by the Papacy are to be found recorded in the canon law drawn up in the thirteenth century, incorporating the decrees of earlier popes since Hildebrand. One of these had claimed that papal authority so far surpassed that of the Holy Roman Emperor himself that "I, of mine own power alone, without a council, have authority to depose him, or to transfer his kingdom, and to give a new election, as I did to Frederic and divers others. What power, then, or potentate in all the world is comparable to me, who have authority to bind and loose both in heaven and earth? that is, who have power both of heavenly things, and also of temporal things; to whom emperors and kings be more inferior than lead is inferior to gold. For do you not see the necks of great kings and princes bend under our knees, yea, and think themselves happy and well defended if they may kiss our hands?"⁴⁷ He then goes on to boast of the numerous occasions when the popes humiliated the kings of various European nations.

The prophecy is further amplified in the interpretation (v. 25) which says, "he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law." In fulfilment, the canon law says that "the pope, being the vicar of Jesus Christ through the whole world, instead of the living God, hath that dominion and lordship which Christ here on earth would not have, although he had it '*in habitu*', but gave it to Peter '*in actu*'; that is, the universal jurisdiction both of spiritual things, and also of temporal."⁴⁸ Having in these words

⁴⁶ CMH V, p. 65-69; Milman IV, p. 96 ff.

⁴⁷ John Fox, *Acts and Monuments* (R.T.S. edn., 1877) II, p. 149.

⁴⁸ *Acts & Mon.* IV, p. 157.

usurped a position superior to Christ Himself, the pope continues, "I, the ordinary of all men, have the authority of the king of all kings upon subjects. I am in all and above all, so that God Himself, and I the vicar of God, have both one consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do . . . It is said of me that I have a heavenly arbitrement, and therefore am able to change the nature of things, and of nothing to make things to be. . . I am able by the law to dispense above the law, and of wrong to make justice, in correcting laws and changing them. . . Read my canon decretal *De transl. episc. Cap 'Quanto'*. Do you not see there manifestly expressed, how not man but God alone separates that which the bishop of Rome doth dissolve and separate? Wherefore, if those things that I do be said to be done not of man, but of God, what can you make me but God? Again, if prelates of the church be called and counted of Constantine for gods, I then, being above all prelates, seem by this reason to be above all gods. Wherefore no marvel if it be in my power to change time and times, to alter and abrogate laws, to dispense with all things, yea, with the precepts of Christ?"⁴⁹

These blasphemous claims, which agree almost word for word with Daniel's prophecy, are corroborated by examples where the pope had actually reversed Christ's commands. For example, "Where Christ bids Peter put up his sword, and admonished his disciples not to use any outward force in revenging themselves, do not I, Pope Nicholas, writing to the bishops of France, exhort them to draw out their material swords in pursuing their enemies, and recovering their possessions?" And again, "Whereas Christ was present himself at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, do not I, Pope Martin, in my distinction, inhibit the spiritual to be present at marriage feasts, and also to marry themselves?" Again, "Where matrimony, by Christ, cannot be loosed but only for whoredom, do not I, Pope Gregory junior, writing to Boniface, permit the same to be broken for impotency or infirmity of body?"⁵⁰

(c) *War with the Saints*

We saw earlier that Daniel, in verses 7 to 14, gave an account of his vision of the fourth beast, followed by a summary of it in verses 19 to 22, before giving us the interpretation in verses 23 to 27. In

⁴⁹ *Acts & Mon.* IV, p. 159.

⁵⁰ *Acts & Mon.* IV, p. 159 f.

verse 21 of the summary, he introduces an additional feature of the little horn not previously mentioned, but which precedes the judgement by the Ancient of Days: "As I looked, this horn made war with the saints, and prevailed over them until the Ancient of Days came." When Daniel says "As I looked," he implies that an interval of time elapsed before the next item he describes. Consequently the war with the saints did not begin until after the little horn had spoken its great words, and in contrast to its small beginning, now "seemed greater than its fellows" (v. 20).

(i) *The Albigensian Massacre, 1209*

Following the rise of the Papacy to greater power after the time of Hildebrand (Gregory VII, 1073-1085), the third of a series of edicts was issued from Rome in 1179, which commanded princes everywhere to make war on supposed heretics, to take their possessions as spoil, reduce them to slavery, and deny them Christian burial. Pope Innocent III put this into effect in 1206, when he sent his monks to preach a crusade throughout France against the heretics. Principal target were the Albigenses in the south who may perhaps have been guilty of a few minor errors, but otherwise held "nearly all the principles upon which Luther and Calvin founded the Reformation in the sixteenth century."⁵¹

Preparations for this war of extermination went on for three years until "in the spring of 1209 these armed fanatics were ready to march. One body had assembled at Lyons. Led by Arnold, Abbot of Citeaux and legate of the pope, it descended by the valley of the Rhone. A second army gathered in the Agenois under the Archbishop of Bordeaux. A third horde of militant pilgrims marshalled in the north. . . . The chief director of this sacred war was the papal legate, the Abbot of Citeaux."⁵²

The Albigenses meant to offer stiff resistance, and retired within the walls of two fortified cities, Beziers and Carcassonne. But when the three armies arrived outside the walls of Beziers, the citizens went out to attack them. "The assault was repelled, and the crusaders, mingling with the citizens as they hurried back to the town in broken crowds, entered the gates along with them, and Beziers was in their hands. . . . The multitude, when they saw that

⁵¹ Sismondi, *History of Crusades against the Albigenses*, p. 243, apud Wylie I, p. 45; cf. W. Cunningham, *Historical Theology I* (1960), p. 455.

⁵² Wylie I, p. 41.

the city was taken, fled to the churches. . . . The wretched citizens were slaughtered in a trice. Their dead bodies covered the floor of the church; they were piled in heaps round the altar; their blood flowed in torrents at the door. 'Seven thousand bodies,' says Sismondi, 'were counted in the Magdalen alone. When the crusaders had massacred the last living creature in Beziers, and had pillaged the houses of all that they thought worth carrying off, they set fire to the city in every part at once, and reduced it to a vast funeral pile. Not a house remained standing, not one human being alive.'"⁵³

The crusaders then turned on Carcassonne, where the defenders put up such a stiff resistance that the papal legate resorted to deceit. After swearing to respect their liberty, he induced the Albigensian leaders and three hundred knights to come to a peace conference, but then made them prisoners. Seeing what had happened, the rest of the garrison and inhabitants escaped from the city through a secret tunnel, whereupon the papal legate took revenge on the knights and other captives, burning four hundred of them alive, and hanging the rest.⁵⁴

Those who try to whitewash the papacy make out that the pope had nothing to do with this massacre of innocent Christians. Records reveal, however, that Pope Innocent III had from the first obtained authentic information straight from the war. Regarding the storming of Beziers, he had received a written report from his own legate, the Abbot of Citeaux, saying, "Our men, sparing neither rank, nor sex, nor age, slew about 20,000 souls with the edge of the sword; and, making a huge slaughter, pillaged and burned the whole city by reason of God's wrath wondrously kindled against it."⁵⁵ Some Catholics, on the other hand, are proud of Innocent III, under whose auspices the Bishop of Toulouse is said to have destroyed more than 500,000 folk great and small, for he has since been described as "the best of the popes," and "glorious in all his works." He was extolled "because he lorded it over kings, kingdoms and empires, drove out proud heretics, exalted the Catholics, and sent infidels into exile."⁵⁶

⁵³ Wylie I, p. 42 f.

⁵⁴ Wylie I, p. 44; Milman V, p. 426 ff.; G. G. Coulton, *Inquisition and Liberty* (1938), p. 98 ff.

⁵⁵ Coulton, op. cit., p. 99, translated from Migne, P.L. CCXIII, p. 139.

⁵⁶ H. K. Mann, *Lives of the Popes XI*, p. 9 and XII, p. 303.

(ii) *The Inquisition*

In the series of persecuting edicts that led to the Albigensian massacre, the foundation had been laid for what later became known as the Inquisition. Wylie recalls that the Council of Toulouse, held in 1229, "still further perfected the organisation and developed the working of this terrible tribunal. It erected in every city a council of Inquisitors consisting of one priest and three laymen whose business it was to search for heretics in towns, houses, cellars, and other lurking-places, also in caves, woods and fields, and to denounce them to the bishops, lords, or their bailiffs. Once discovered, a summary but dreadful ordeal conducted them to the stake. . . . It worked on and on, day and night, century after century with a regularity that was appalling. With steady march it extended its area, until at last it embraced all the countries of Europe, and kept piling up its dead year by year in ever larger and ghastlier heaps. These awful tragedies were the sole and deliberate acts of the Church of Rome."⁵⁷

(iii) *The Waldenses*

One of the strongest communities of true Christians was that of the Waldenses whose strongholds from earliest times had been in the Cottonian Alps between France and Italy, and whose colonies were dispersed throughout Europe. Against them the popes directed numerous campaigns led not only by the inquisitors but also supported by the kings of France and Naples. In 1487, Pope Innocent VIII issued a bull denouncing the Waldenses as heretics, and ordered their extermination if they did not recant. In the following year a crusade was organised, and an army of 18,000 regular troops, augmented by thousands of ruffians, advanced into the Alpine valleys. A French division, attacking from the northwest, entered the valley of Loyse, whose inhabitants took refuge in an immense cavern. Their enemies, unable to force their way in, lighted a fire in the entrance, and over three thousand persons, including four hundred children, were suffocated.⁵⁸ The main papal army, however, advancing from the Italian side, met with defeat when they became entrapped in a narrow valley.⁵⁹ After that there was peace for a while, but the persecutions were soon resumed.

⁵⁷ Wylie I, p. 45 f.

⁵⁸ Wylie II, p. 434 ff.

⁵⁹ Wylie II, p. 443.

Eventually, in January 1655, an order was given that all Protestants in certain valleys were to be evacuated, and the inhabitants were to sell their lands to the Romanists within twenty days. Three months later, following their refusal, an army of fifteen thousand arrived at the village of La Torre. Failing to take the valleys by force, they obtained access to the Waldensian strongholds on the pretext that they had come to arrest only a few fugitives, but later the soldiers turned on the unsuspecting victims, and after inflicting horrible tortures, massacred them.⁶⁰

(iv) *The Huguenots*

When the Protestant Reformation swept across Europe in the sixteenth century, the followers of Calvin, known as Huguenots, were persecuted by the French monarchy which remained loyal to the pope. In a series of wars between Roman Catholics and Protestants, Pope Pius V sent money and troops to support the Catholic royalists who, in accordance with Daniel's prophecy (v. 21) were usually victorious. Consequently, in a letter to Charles IX of France, the pope wrote, "You ought to take advantage of the opportunity this victory offers you, for pursuing and destroying all the enemies that still remain."⁶¹ The pope also urged the queen-mother, the ruler behind the throne, to pursue their enemies "till they are all massacred, for it is only by the entire extermination of heretics that the Roman Catholic worship can be restored."⁶²

Following secret consultation with the king of Spain in 1572, Charles IX and his mother laid a plot to induce all the leading Protestants to assemble in Paris to negotiate a peaceful settlement of their differences, and agree on cooperation between Catholics and Protestants on the conduct of foreign wars. Then, at two o'clock in the morning of 24th August, St. Bartholomew's Day, the church bells began to peal as a signal that the massacre was to begin. Some two hundred Protestant noblemen who had been guests in the place were the first to suffer, being led out one by one to be hacked to pieces, and their corpses piled up at the gates of the Louvre. By morning "the entire population of the French capital was seen maddened with rage, or aghast with terror. . . . Corpses were being precipitated from roofs and windows, others were being

⁶⁰ Wylie II, p. 482 ff.

⁶¹ Wylie II, p. 591.

⁶² Wylie II, p. 591.

dragged through the streets by the feet, or were piled in carts and driven away to be shot into the river."⁶³

In pursuance of orders sent from the court, the massacre was extended to the various provinces, and for two months these butcheries were continued, in the course of which, according to the most reliable sources, some seventy thousand Protestants were slaughtered throughout the kingdom of France.⁶⁴ Pope Pius V had died about three months before this happened, but his successor, Gregory XIII commanded bonfires to be lighted and a medal struck to celebrate the occasion. On one side of this an angel is seen with drawn sword, smiting a prostrate host of Protestants, above which is the motto in Latin, "The Massacre of the Huguenots, 1572". The personal approval of the pope himself is endorsed on the reverse which shows his head and name, "Gregory XIII, Pont. Max." "All the historians," writes Wylie, "who lived nearest the time, and took every care to inform themselves, with one consent declare that the massacre was premeditated and arranged. It had its origination in the courts of Paris, Madrid and the Vatican."⁶⁵

These brief extracts from the records in many large volumes of similar papal history have been cited not from a sectarian motive to vilify the Roman church, but as necessary to demonstrate that the Papacy in the middle ages fulfilled every detail of Daniel's prophecies of the little horn, both as to its great boasting words, and in making war on God's people and conquering them (v. 21). That these evils are no longer a feature of the Papacy today is also a confirmation of the prophecy for, as we shall see, the time allowed for these things was limited (v. 25).

6. The Ancient of Days

In Daniel's account of his vision, he followed the description of the little horn with the statement, "As I looked, thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days took his seat; his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool. . . . The court sat in judgement, and the books were opened" (v. 9-10). The phrase "as I looked", or "I kept watching" (NEB) suggests a lapse of time before the thrones were put in place for judgement to begin by the "Ancient of Days". In the past some commentators

⁶³ Wylie II, p. 603.

⁶⁴ Wylie II, p. 604.

⁶⁵ Wylie II, p. 597.

have taken this "Ancient of Days" to be the Second Person of the Trinity and have assumed, therefore, that the judgement referred to is that destined to occur at the second advent. It should be evident that this is quite impossible from Daniel's further statement that "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him" (v. 13). Here the coming of the Son of Man with the clouds of heaven must be an allusion to the second coming of Christ, for He is so described in the New Testament.⁶⁶ This Son of Man must, therefore, be a different Person from the Ancient of Days.

The Ancient of Days is clearly "the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come" (Rev. 4:8) who sits on the throne in heaven (Rev. 4:2). Revelation 5:6 shows that the One who sits on the throne cannot be the Second Person of the Trinity, because the Lamb (Jesus Christ) took the book from him that sat on the throne. It follows, therefore, that the judgement by the Ancient of Days described by Daniel is a judgement by "the Lord God Almighty who was, and is, and is to come", and is similar to various other earlier judgements, such as that which fell on Egypt in the time of Moses (Gen. 15:14 AV), upon Israel when they were carried away into exile (Jer. 1:15-16), or on Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The time of this judgement is said to be while Daniel was looking "because of the sound of the great words which the horn was speaking" (v. 11). The result followed after an interval while Daniel continued to look until "the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire" (v. 11). Now we saw that the great words of the Papacy began at the end of the eleventh century, and were summed up in the canon law published by Pope Innocent III and his successors during the thirteenth century. Not long after this, in fulfilment of the prophecy, the eastern, or Byzantine, part of the Roman empire, represented in the prophecy by the body of the beast, in contrast to its western ten-horned head, was progressively reduced, from 1350 onwards, by the repeated attacks of the Ottoman Turks, and was finally destroyed when Constantinople fell in 1453.

"As for the rest of the beasts," says Daniel (v. 12), "their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." Unlike the Roman empire, totally destroyed by the

⁶⁶ Matt. 24:30, 26:64; Mark 13:26; Acts 1:9; Rev. 1:7.

Turks, the earlier three empires lost only world supremacy, but remained alive in a weakened form. Thus the priestcraft of Babylon was transferred to the Roman emperors under the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, and thence to the Papacy.⁶⁷ Already in biblical times Peter referred to Rome as Babylon (1 Peter 5: 13). As for Persia and Greece, they remain as second class powers to this day.

It is only after a further interval that Daniel comes to the second advent: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man" (v. 13). The lapse of time is emphasised by the NEB rendering: "I was still watching in the visions of the night and I saw one like a man coming with the clouds of heaven." The protracted sequence of events in the vision agrees with the fulfilment in history, and makes it clear that the judgement of the Ancient of Days was to take place a considerable time before the judgement by the Son of Man at the second advent.

7. The Time Period

We have seen that the little horn "made war with the saints and prevailed over them, until the Ancient of Days came, and judgement was given for the saints of the Most High" (7: 21-22). This judgement was evidently given at the time of the Reformation when Protestants began to free themselves both politically and doctrinally from the domination of Rome. The interpretation reveals, however, that the persecution of Christians was to last only for a specified time: "they shall be given into his hand for a time, two times, and half a time," (v. 25) that is for three times and a half. As we have seen from Revelation 12, verses 6 and 14, this represents 1260 days, which signify so many years. During this period the saints "shall be given into his hand," that is be subject to the little horn, the Papacy.

Now we saw that the Papacy became established in the time of Justinian, when the last of the three kingdoms, that of the Goths, was destroyed. At that time the whole Christian church was legally made subject to the bishop of Rome by a decree of the emperor who appointed him "head of all the Holy Churches". But we saw that this became effective only as a result of the re-conquest of Italy by Justinian's generals, Belisarius and Narses.⁶⁸ Thus, as with the 2520 years in chapter 4, the beginning of the period was marked

⁶⁷ A. Hislop, *Two Babylons*, p. 240 f., 256 f.

⁶⁸ See page 73 above.

by a whole series of events spread over a number of years. We may expect, therefore, to find a corresponding series of events to mark its end.

Now Justinian is particularly famous for his codification of Roman law. The importance of this law for the church lay in its "dealing with the organisation of the clergy, the regulation of their moral life, the foundation and administration of religious houses, the government of ecclesiastical property, and the control and jurisdiction to which clerics were liable."⁶⁹ The first edition of Justinian's Code was promulgated in 529, but it was subsequently revised, the final edition being issued in 534.⁷⁰ Adding 1260 years to these dates brings us to 1789 and 1794. In 1789 the French Revolution began when Roman law was rejected, the Catholic church in France was nationalised and its property confiscated. The Revolution culminated with the Reign of Terror in 1794 when, between 10 June and 27 July, 1376 victims fell to the guillotine.⁷¹

Roman Law established	Roman Law rejected
529-534	1789-1794
(— — — — — 1260 years — — — — —)	

Of particular significance was the decree of Justinian in 533 which made the bishop of Rome "head of all the Holy Churches".⁷² Adding 1260 years brings us to 1793 when the revolutionaries issued a series of "de-christianisation" decrees. "In October 1793 France deliberately broke with her religious past, when the convention voted the most anti-Christian act of the Revolution, the replacement of the Gregorian calendar" by a calendar based on a ten-day week eliminating Sunday.⁷³ On 9th November the Cathedral of Notre Dame was consecrated to the worship of Reason, and by the year end all churches in Paris, and many in the provinces, were closed. Not only papal authority, but Christianity itself was cast off. At first this applied only to France, but in 1796 Napoleon invaded Italy,⁷⁴ threatening the pope who was forced to pay heavily to

⁶⁹ CMH II, p. 43.

⁷⁰ CMH II, p. 59-61.

⁷¹ NCMH IX, p. 284.

⁷² See page 73 n. 26 above.

⁷³ NCMH IX, p. 147.

⁷⁴ NCMH IX, p. 255, 415; L. Pastor, *History of the Popes* XL (English transl. 1953), p. 293.

secure a truce. This lasted only until 1798, when the French army entered Rome, expelled the pope, and sent him into exile.⁷⁵ These events occurred just 1260 years after Belisarius invaded Italy and established the Papacy in Rome.

Decree establishing the Papacy	Belisarius invaded Italy	Papal supremacy established	Decrees rejecting Christianity	Napoleon invaded Italy	Papal supremacy overthrown
533	536	538	1793	1796	1798
(----- 1260 years -----)					
(----- 1260 years -----)					
(----- 1260 years -----)					

This did not bring the Papacy to an end, neither did Daniel's prophecy say that it would; it says only that the saints "shall be given into his hand" for the stated period. All that the revolutionaries achieved in 1793 was the end of papal authority, for as soon as the pope was removed from power, freedom of religious worship followed. After a lapse of two years the Papacy was restored, but Catholicism was no longer the state religion in France, but the religion of the majority of Frenchmen, the Protestant Reformed and Lutheran churches being established on a par with the Roman.⁷⁶

The Napoleonic wars, 1796-1815, were disastrous for the Papacy. Twice during this period the pope was led away captive, and in 1806 the Holy Roman Empire collapsed. In 1808 Napoleon suppressed the last remaining Inquisition in Spain, and it was officially abolished in 1813. This, however, is not the point of Daniel's time prophecy. These same disasters brought release to God's people from papal oppression over a period of nineteen years falling exactly 1260 years after 536-555, when Justinian's generals, Belisarius and Narses, reconquered Italy, securing supremacy for the bishop of Rome as head of the whole Christian church.⁷⁷

Justinian's Recovery of Italy 536-555	Napoleonic Wars 1796-1815
(----- 1260 years -----)	

All these events confirmed the view of many early students of prophecy who had published them long before the French Revolution. Thus, as far back as 1689, Dr. D. Cressener, in a book *The*

⁷⁵ NCMH IX, p. 256; L. Pastor, op. cit., p. 332-337.

⁷⁶ NCMH IX, p. 153 f.

⁷⁷ See page 73 above.

Judgements of God upon the Roman-Catholic Church, reckoned 1260 years from Justinian's recovery of the western empire, and gave his opinion that these judgements "will not be much sooner or later than about 100 years hence."⁷⁸ Others made different calculations, but it was widely believed that France would be the principal agent for overthrowing the Papacy.⁷⁹

8. The Kingdom of God

The fall of the Papacy marked a further stage in the judgement of the fourth beast and its little horn by the Ancient of Days. This was to be a gradual process, continuing to the end of the age: "the court shall sit in judgement, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end" (v. 26). This brings us to the last two verses of the vision which foretell the return of Christ to establish his kingdom: "With the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man. . . . And to him was given dominion, and glory, and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed" (v. 13.14). There remains likewise one verse of the interpretation unfulfilled: "The kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them" (v. 27).

⁷⁸ op. cit., p. 309.

⁷⁹ Thomas Newton, *Dissertations on the Prophecies* II, p. 336.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT

Drawing attention to the eastern setting of the prophecy in chapter eight, Daniel says that in a vision he was in Shushan, future capital of the Persian empire, on the river Ulai, or Elaeus, now known as the Karun. There he saw a ram: "It had two horns; and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last" (v. 3). In the interpretation the angel Gabriel explained that "these are the kings of Media and Persia" (v. 20). This prophecy was given in the third year of Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, shortly before it was overthrown by the Medes and Persians. Half a century earlier, the Medes in northern Persia had begun to establish an empire in eastern Asia Minor, but in 550 B.C. they were conquered by Cyrus, king of Persia, who thus became ruler of their united empires. These were the two horns of the ram, the dominant Persian horn coming up last.

Daniel continues, "I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward; no beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power; he did as he pleased and magnified himself" (v. 4). This was fulfilled between 546 and 539 B.C., when Cyrus conquered first Lydia in western Asia Minor, then Bactria in central Asia north of Persia, and finally Babylon to the southwest, and later when his son Cambyses conquered Egypt in 525. Under his successors, the Achaemenid dynasty, the Persian empire became the greatest world power, but passed its zenith when Xerxes unsuccessfully attacked Greece in 480 B.C. It was to defend themselves against the Persian danger at that time that various petty Greek kingdoms first became united, after which a succession of four states, namely Athens, Sparta, Thebes, and Macedonia, domi-

nated the league.¹ As we saw in Daniel 7:6, these were the four heads of the third beast.

1. The Great Horn

While Daniel was watching the ram charging westward, "Behold, a he-goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes" (v. 5). In the interpretation it is explained that "the he-goat is the king of Greece: and the great horn between his eyes is the first king" (v. 21). Until 338 B.C., the Greek states had been quarrelling one with another, but then Philip, king of Macedonia, succeeded in uniting them with a view to attacking the Persians. Two years later, however, he was assassinated, and was succeeded by his son Alexander, who became the great horn, or first king of Daniel's he-goat.

After consolidating his position at home, Alexander crossed into Asia Minor in 334 B.C., where he overthrew the Persian garrisons. In the following year, 333, Darius III, king of Persia, counter-attacked with a great army, but in vain, for he was routed at the battle of Issus near the northeast angle of the Mediterranean. In 332, Alexander, after being held up for seven months besieging Tyre, pushed south through Palestine and, after a further delay for two months at Gaza, he entered Egypt unopposed. In the following year he returned through Palestine and Syria to march east against Persia itself. Meanwhile Darius had mustered a fresh army and opposed him at Gaugamela, not far from the ruins of Nineveh on the Tigris. In September 331 B.C., a great battle was fought in which the Persian army was defeated; Darius fled into Media, and all organised resistance to the Greek advance came to an end. Alexander marched on into Persia where he captured millions of pounds worth of treasure from the royal palaces at Susa and Persepolis. In the following spring he turned north to Ecbatana, capital of Media, in pursuit of the fugitive Darius, finally catching and killing the Persian king near the mountains south of the Caspian Sea.

All this was summed up in Daniel's prophecy: "He [the Greek goat] came to the ram with two horns [Medo-Persia], which I had seen standing on the bank of the river, and he ran at him in his mighty wrath. I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him, and struck the ram and broke his two horns; and the

¹ CAH VI.

ram had no power to stand before him; and there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power" (v. 6-7).

"Then the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly" (v. 8). In fulfilment, Alexander continued his victorious campaign through central Asia for several years, finally emerging into India in 536, where he marched down the Indus to the sea, and returned to Persia by way of the coast. In 323 B.C., while preparing for an expedition into Arabia, he was suddenly taken ill and died in Babylon at the early age of 33.

2. The Four Horns (v. 8, 22)

This was just as Daniel had foretold, "When he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven" (v. 8). The interpretation says that, "As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power" (v. 22). The words "not with his power" evidently signify that the four kingdoms would not be governed by Alexander's descendants. He had, however, an only son born a few months after his death, and at first the empire was governed by his generals acting as regents, for nominally the government belonged to Alexander's son. But about 310 B.C., when the boy was approaching the age when he might have entered into his inheritance, he was murdered along with his mother by Cassander, the general in control of Greece. Immediately Cassander and the other generals proclaimed themselves kings of the various provinces over which they ruled.

The kingdoms into which the empire was thus divided could roughly be described as: (1) Greece and Macedonia, ruled by Cassander, (2) Western and northern Asia Minor together with Thrace in Europe, ruled by Lysimachus, (3) Syria, Mesopotamia and other Asian territories, ruled by Antigonos, and (4) Egypt, ruled by Ptolemy. No exact boundaries can be laid down, since these fluctuated as the several generals fought one against the other.

Another general, Seleucus, had already got control of Babylon in 312, but in course of time he took over Persia and other eastern territories. Eventually in 301, with the help of Lysimachus, he conquered Antigonos, and took possession of Syria, building Antioch there as his capital. The basic division of Alexander's empire into four kingdoms thus remained valid, the position after 301 B.C. being:

- (1) Cassander in Greece.
- (2) Lysimachus in Asia Minor.
- (3) Seleucus in Syria.
- (4) Ptolemy in Egypt.

These four kingdoms form the historical background out of which Daniel derived a later kingdom, represented by a little horn: "Out of one of them came forth a little horn" (v. 9). Unlike the little horn in chapter seven, which arose among ten contemporary kingdoms, this horn was to arise out of one of four, and at a much later date, for the interpretation states that, "At the latter end of their rule . . . a king of bold countenance, one who understands riddles, shall arise" (v. 23). In view of their clearly different origins, there should be no reason to confuse the little horns in chapters seven and eight. But before considering the predicted career of this other little horn, let us first examine what is said about the time of its appearance.

3. The Time of Fulfilment (v. 15-19)

When Daniel sought to know the meaning of the vision, the angel began his interpretation by stating when it was to be fulfilled and understood: "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end" (v. 17). This statement seems to apply more to the time when the main subject of the prophecy was to be fulfilled, namely the little horn, than to the historical background about the ram and the goat. Now this term, the time of the end, is not the same as "the latter days" mentioned in 2: 28 which we have taken to mean the whole of the Christian era. It is also to be distinguished from "the consummation" (Dan. 9: 27, AV), signifying the end of the age, or the Second Advent. It occurs again in Daniel 11: 35, 11: 40 and 12: 4, where it evidently signifies the fifth period of world history symbolised by the feet in Daniel's vision of the metallic image in chapter 2.

The angel gave further particulars about the time of fulfilment, saying, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation; for it pertains to the appointed time of the end" (v. 19). Thus, the time of the end is closely connected with "the latter end of the indignation." Some have thought that the "indignation" or "wrath" (NEB) is the time of God's wrath against Israel, but there is very little evidence for this view. In Daniel 11: 36 the "wilful king" is said to prosper "till the indig-

nation is accomplished", and then "at the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him" (v. 40). Here the indignation appears to be God's wrath against the "Wilful King" who, as we shall see, represents the eastern sector of the Roman empire. Thus "the appointed time of the end" (8: 19) is seen to be the time that God has appointed for the end of the fourth empire, and the beginning of the fifth and final period symbolised by the feet of the metallic image.

4. The Rise of the Little Horn (v. 9-10, 23-25)

In view of these clear chronological statements, we must look for the rise of the little horn during the decline of the Roman empire. Just as the little horn in Daniel 7 arising from the Roman empire represented the politico-religious power of the Roman church, the symbolism of the little horn in chapter 8 suggests that it represents the Moslem powers that arose within the territory of the Greek empire of Alexander the Great under the religious leadership of the Caliphs. As we shall see, all the details of the prophecy were, in fact, fulfilled by Mohammed and his successors.

In his vision, Daniel saw that the little horn "grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land" (v. 9). Within a year of the death of the Prophet in A.D. 632, Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, brought the whole Arabian peninsula under the sway of Islam.² In the following year he overran Mesopotamia, and attacked Persia in the east,³ but returned in 634 to invade Syria and Palestine, "the glorious land", capturing Jerusalem in 637.⁴ Subsequent expansion was rapid, and Gibbon says of Mohammed that, "One hundred years after his flight from Mecca, the arms and reign of his successors extended from India to the Atlantic Ocean, over the various and distant provinces which may be comprised under the names of Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa and Spain,"⁵ that is all territories south of the Mediterranean Sea and east of Palestine as far as central Asia.

"It grew great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled on them. It magnified itself even to the Prince of the host" (v. 10-11a). The

² W. Muir, *The Caliphate* (1915), p. 18-40.

³ Gibbon V, p. 299 ff.

⁴ Gibbon V, p. 328 f.

⁵ Gibbon V, p. 297.

Prince of the host is called "Prince of princes" in the interpretation (v. 25), a title that can apply only to the Lord Jesus Christ. It follows that the host of heaven must be the Christian church, and the stars must represent Christian leaders. Thus the prophecy accurately describes the hostile attitude of Moslems to the Christian communities that remained within their conquered territories. Although at first Christians themselves were not put to death, Gibbon informs us that during the ten years of the administration of the second Caliph, Omar (634-644), four thousand churches or temples were destroyed,⁶ and everything possible was done to humiliate Christians. For example, as signs of their degradation, they were made to wear "a turban or girdle of less honourable colour; instead of horses or mules, they were condemned to ride on asses in the attitude of women. Their public and private buildings were measured by a diminutive standard; in the streets or in the baths it was their duty to give way or bow down before the meanest of people."⁷ Thus, in the words of Daniel, the Moslems metaphorically trampled on the Christians.

Although the followers of Mohammed say they worship the same God as Christians, the Koran denies the doctrine of the Trinity, and declares that they are infidels who say that God is Christ, the son of Mary. Jesus, it says, is no other than a servant who was favoured with a gift of prophecy. Although the Moslem creed declares a belief in one God, it makes Mohammed His prophet, thus placing Mohammed next after God, and superior to Jesus Christ. In this way the little horn "magnified itself even to the Prince of the host" (v. 11), namely the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. The Daily Sacrifice (v. 11-12)

Verses 11 and 12 have been declared the most difficult in the whole book.⁸ Verse 11 reads, "It magnified itself even up to the Prince of the host; and the continual burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown." The continual burnt offering was the daily sacrifice of two lambs, one in the morning, the other in the evening, prescribed in Exodus 29: 38-46 as an act of national dedication.

⁶ Gibbon V, p. 297.

⁷ Gibbon V, p. 383.

⁸ A. A. Bevan, *Short Commentary on Daniel* (1892), p. 137; J. A. Montgomery, *The Book of Daniel* (1927), p. 335.

All the Old Testament sacrifices were set aside by Jesus Christ who is here called the Prince of the host. The abolition of the daily burnt offering in particular, as well as the redundancy of the whole Temple ritual, is clearly foreseen in the AV translation: "By him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down." The AV is, however, wrong in saying, "*He* magnified *himself*, even to the Prince of the host." The pronoun here is feminine, and relates to the little horn which in Hebrew is feminine. The change from feminine to the masculine gender in the second half of the verse makes it absolutely clear that it was not the feminine horn that took away the daily sacrifice, but the masculine Prince of the host.

The first half of verse 12 in the RSV makes no sense at all, and the translators say that the Hebrew is obscure. The AV reads, "And an host was given (him) against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression." There is no definite article before the word host, implying that this host, or army, is not the one referred to in the previous verse. The fulfilment is to be seen either in the Jewish army of Zealots which desecrated the Temple in A.D. 66-70, and allowed the daily sacrifices to cease, or in the Roman army which finally destroyed the Temple and brought its ritual to an end. This destruction was "by reason of transgression", that is of Jewish violation of the law and desecration of the Temple. The abolition of the daily sacrifice is again foretold in Daniel 9, also in connection with the coming Saviour and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

In the second half of Daniel 8: 12, the prophecy reverts to the little horn, indicated as before by the feminine pronoun, this time correctly rendered "it" in the AV: "And it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised and prospered." This presents no difficulty, seeing that the practice and flourishing of the Moslem religion was opposed to Christian truth.

6. The King of Bold Countenance (v. 23-25)

As we have seen, the time of the little horn's appearance was to be during the Christian era, but in the interpretation we are told more particularly, "At the latter end of their rule, when the transgressors have reached their full measure, a king of bold countenance, one who understand riddles, shall arise" (v. 23). The transgressors mentioned here may well be the great apostate church already foretold in chapter 7 under the symbol of the Roman little

horn, namely that headed by the papacy. Their errors did not immediately develop in 538 when the papacy was established, but half a century later. Some time elapsed until, early in the seventh century, Mohammed made his appearance, and there is ample evidence that by then the church had been corrupted by serious and widespread idolatry. Thus Gibbon informs us that "the use and even the worship of images was firmly established before the end of the sixth century."⁹

George Sale, in his *Preliminary Discourse* (ii) to his translation of *The Koran*, also remarks that, "In these dark ages it was that most of those superstitions and corruptions we now justly abhor in the church of Rome were not only broached, but established; which gave great advantages to the propagation of Mohammedanism. The worship of saints and images, in particular, was then arrived at such a scandalous pitch, that it even surpassed whatever is now practised among Romanists."

Since kings, in prophecy, stand for kingdoms or dynasties rather than for individuals, the "king of bold countenance" signifies the whole succession of rulers rather than Mohammed alone. Nevertheless the prophet, as author and instigator of their policies declared that he had been "commanded to propagate his religion by the sword."¹⁰ Gibbon also records that "the martial apostle fought in person at nine battles or sieges, and fifty enterprises of war were achieved in ten years by himself or his lieutenants." He adds that "the private arsenal of the apostle consisted of nine swords, three lances, seven pikes or half-pikes, a quiver and three bows, seven cuirasses, three shields and two helmets."¹¹ His immediate successor Abu Bakr continued his master's policy and declared, on sending his troops into Syria, "I would have you know that the fighting for religion is an act of obedience to God."¹²

The understanding of riddles doubtless refers to the mysteries of the Koran dictated by Mohammed. Claiming to be the mouthpiece of God, he periodically went into a trance, when he would utter supposedly divine oracles to be taken down by a scribe. These were later collected to form the Mohammedan scriptures.¹³

⁹ Gibbon V, p. 144.

¹⁰ Gibbon V, p. 256.

¹¹ Gibbon V, p. 257.

¹² Gibbon V, p. 309.

¹³ Gibbon V, p. 239 f.

"His power shall be great, but not with his power" (v. 24). There can be no doubt about the might of the Moslem powers, first that of the Saracens who conquered north Africa and southwest Asia, and later that of the Turks who overran Asia Minor and most of southeast Europe. But what is the significance of the phrase "not with his own power" added in some versions? In the prophecy concerning the division of Alexander's empire, it was foretold that "four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power" (8: 22). This was taken to mean that Alexander's own descendants would not inherit the four kingdoms. The same meaning may be accepted for the phrase "not with his power" in verse 24, since the caliphs were not descended from the prophet, but were elected rulers.

"And he shall cause fearful destruction, and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people of the saints" (v. 24). Regarding verse 10, of which this is the interpretation, we have already noted the Moslem hostility against Christians who are here called "the people of the saints." Although the Christians exerted considerable armed force against Islam for a time during the Crusades, in the end the Mohammedans actually destroyed the Christian church in many of the areas that they occupied. For example, a flourishing church had once existed throughout northern Africa, but after being weakened by the Vandals, it was finally wiped out by the Saracens. Gibbon recorded that "the northern coast of Africa is the only land in which the light of the Gospel, after a long and perfect establishment, has been totally extinguished."¹⁴ Other eastern churches suffered badly at the hands of the Turks, and Gibbon says that "since the first conquests of the caliphs, the establishment of the Turks in Anatolia or Asia Minor was the most deplorable loss which the church and empire sustained."¹⁵ About the same time, in Jerusalem "the church of the Resurrection was demolished to its foundations" by the fanatical Hakem,¹⁶ Fatimite caliph of Egypt.

"By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand" (v. 25). Gibbon confirms that, "The use of fraud and perfidy, of cruelty and injustice, were often subservient to the propagation of the faith."¹⁷ In particular, he mentions that, "Among the prophecies

¹⁴ Gibbon V, p. 380 ff.

¹⁵ Gibbon VI, p. 25 f.

¹⁶ Gibbon VI, p. 30.

¹⁷ Gibbon V, p. 274.

of the Old and New Testament, which are perverted by the fraud or ignorance of the Musulmans, they apply to the prophet the promise of the *Paraclete* or Comforter."¹⁸ This arrogant blasphemy seems to be a fulfilment of Daniel's words, "And in his own mind he shall magnify himself" (v. 25).

The RSV tells us next that, "Without warning he shall destroy many" (v. 25). It is commonplace for aggressors to attack without warning, so this would not be a distinguishing feature of the little horn. The AV gives a more accurate translation: "By peace he shall destroy many," where destroy means also to corrupt. It was a notable feature of Moslem policy to obtain converts by offering peace to those who accepted their religion. Thus the citizens of Damascus were given, says Gibbon, "the usual option of the Mohammedan faith, of tribute, or of war,"¹⁹ and the same offer of "the Koran, the tribute or the sword" was made to the Coptic church in Egypt.²⁰ The corruption of many by offers of peace is nothing other than implementing Mohammed's command to propagate his false religion by the sword.

The angel's last prediction about this king of bold countenance was that "he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes; but by no human hand he shall be broken" (v. 25). We have already observed that the Moslem creed places Mohammed above Jesus Christ. Here it is also predicted that Moslem power would not be overthrown by human agency. Spontaneous disruption has always been a feature of Moslem empires in the past. Whereas Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome were overthrown by other military powers, and absorbed by succeeding empires, it has been characteristic of the Saracen and Ottoman empires that they have collapsed more from internal dissension and disruption than from external aggression.

The Saracens reached the zenith of their power under the Omayyad dynasty, but decline set in after the death of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (786-809). "The swift decline and fall of Arab dominion and Arab civilization have never yet been fully explained," writes Edward Atayah. "Break-up and stagnation followed advance and efflorescence with bewildering rapidity, and many of the explanations offered do no more than beg the funda-

¹⁸ Gibbon V, p. 239, n. 2.

¹⁹ Gibbon V, p. 312.

²⁰ Gibbon V, p. 341.

mental question. Among these explanations are the early divisions that destroyed the unity of the Arab Empire, such as the great schism between the Sunni and Shia Muslims, and the subsequent fragmentation of the Caliphate which began with the secession of Spain under the Umayyads when the Abbasids overthrew the former in the east."²¹ J. J. Saunders adds that, "Racial jealousy and dis-harmony may be accounted one of the principal causes of the disintegration of the Caliphate which followed swiftly on the overthrow of the Omayyads."²²

A similar fate befell the Ottoman Empire which, at the end of the seventeenth century, included large areas of southeast Europe, as well as north Africa as far west as Algeria. But "the next two centuries (1700-1900)," writes J. J. Saunders, "were the most dismal of Islamic history. There was no catastrophe comparable to the Mongol conquests of the thirteenth century, but political decay and collapse everywhere under the relentless pressure of the western powers, whose science, industry and technology gave them temporarily the mastery of the world, and what was more serious, a challenge to Islamic fundamentals on the intellectual plane."²³ The Balkan War in 1912, and the First World War resulted in further loss of territory both in Europe and in Asia, but the Caliphate itself was not overthrown as the result of external aggression. The prophecy was fulfilled when the sultan-caliph was removed in 1922, and the office itself was abolished in 1924 by the Turkish government under Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk).²⁴ In more recent times we have seen the collapse of the short-lived "United Arab Republic", and the continuing disunity of the Arab nations.

7. The Time Period (v. 13-14)

At the close of his vision Daniel heard one saint ask another, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" to which the reply was, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (v. 13-14). On the hypothesis that days uniformly symbolise years throughout all Daniel's prophecies, we may take this

²¹ E. Atiyah, *The Arabs* (Penguin, 1958), p. 45 f.

²² J. J. Saunders, *History of Medieval Islam* (1965), p. 104.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 202.

²⁴ *Cambridge History of Islam* I, p. 532 f.

period to be one of 2300 years. The terminal date is here specifically associated with the cleansing of the sanctuary, that is the temple site in Jerusalem. Since at the present time the temple site is defiled by the presence of a Moslem mosque, called the Dome of the Rock, this not only confirms that the Moslem powers are the main subject of the prophecy, but also indicates that the predicted period has not yet run out.

Seeing that prophecies always seem obscure until they have been fulfilled, it is not surprising that this one is not as clear as we should like. The question is, when did the period of 2300 years begin? In the case of the Papacy, we saw that 1260 years was the duration of its political supremacy, but here the period is given in answer to the question, "How long shall be the vision . . .?" Presumably, therefore, we are to start calculating from the events symbolised at the beginning of the vision, and not from the rise of Mohammed, or the Moslem powers.

Now we have already seen, both regarding the Babylonian sequence of empires in Daniel 4, and the Papacy in chapter 7, that these arose in successive stages which were followed at the end of their respective time periods by successive stages in their decline. If we apply this principle to the Moslem powers, and regard them as arising out of the ancient Greek empire, then we should expect the successive stages in the rise of that empire to be followed 2300 years later by significant stages leading to the removal of Moslem occupation of the sanctuary and the Holy Land. It may, therefore, not be unimportant to notice, as earlier writers did, that the Ottoman Turks were defeated in the Greek War of Independence in 1821, two thousand three hundred years from 480 B.C., when the onslaught of the Persians under Xerxes caused the petty Greek kingdoms to unite against him.

The prophecy relates, however, particularly to the Holy Land and the sanctuary. Now in 404 B.C. the Egyptians threw off the Persian yoke and became independent, but in 385 a Persian army was despatched to restore the situation. From 385 to 383 a war was waged in Palestine, resulting in a Persian defeat, and it appears that the Persians were driven north as far as Syria, and so lost control of Palestine. Reckoning two thousand three hundred years from Egyptian independence in 404 B.C., brings us to 1897 and the First Zionist Congress which led to the return of the Jews to Palestine. Reckoning two thousand three hundred years from the removal of

Persian domination of Palestine in 385-383 brings us to the liberation of the land from Turkish Moslems in 1916-1918.

Liberation of
Palestine from
Persians
385-383 B.C.

Liberation of
Palestine from
Turks
1916-1918

(— — — — — 2300 years — — — — —)

Daniel's vision, and therefore the time prophecy, was concerned with the conflict between the ram and the he-goat, symbolising the actual conquest of Medo-Persia by Alexander the Great. His campaign began in 334 B.C. when he crossed from Europe into Asia, and it continued till he died eleven years later when at the height of his power. More than two centuries ago, Thomas Newton, in his *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, pointed to 334 B.C. as marking the beginning of the "sanctuary cycle", and remarked, "Two thousand three hundred years from that time will draw towards the conclusion of the sixth millennium of the world." Again, Adam Clarke's Commentary, popular during the early part of the nineteenth century, also reckoned from 334 B.C., but failing to allow for no year between 1 B.C. and A.D. 1, gave 1966 instead of 1967 as the terminal date.

However, since the Greek empire did not reach its zenith until 323 B.C., we ought to reckon the whole span of eleven years from 1967 to 1978 which fall 2,300 years after Alexander's victorious campaign, as being a period during which the Moslem presence should be progressively removed from the Holy Land, preparatory to the establishment of the kingdom of God. In 1967, as a result of the Six-Day War, the old city of Jerusalem, including the important temple area, passed from Moslem into Jewish hands.

Alexander's Empire
established
334-323 B.C.

Removal of Moslem
Influence in Palestine
1967-1978

(— — — — — 2300 years — — — — —)

In 1978, at the Camp David Conference in America, the Israeli Prime Minister insisted that, although the Arabs might be allowed a self-governing state on the West Bank, the Jews would not give up sovereignty over this territory, and the right to station troops there. Concerning the old city of Jerusalem, he reminded President Carter of the saying, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget her cunning" (Ps. 137: 5).

CHAPTER NINE

THE COMING OF MESSIAH

Daniel 9, known as the Seventy Weeks Prophecy, is among the most controversial in the Book. Most of the difficulties arise from alterations made, both in the original Hebrew and in English translations, in order to adapt the prophecy to some preconceived idea about its fulfilment. It is evident from the introduction, verses 1-23, that atonement for sin forms the main theme of the prophecy. Here Daniel confessed the sins of his people, and acknowledged that "because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people have become a byword among all who are round about us. Now therefore, O our God," he prayed, "hearken to the prayer of thy servant and to his supplications, and for thy own sake cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary which is desolate" (v. 16-17).

Daniel had been led to make this confession and prayer because he had "perceived in the books the number of years which, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely seventy years" (v. 2). The allusion is evidently to Jeremiah 25: 8-14. In accordance with this prophecy Babylon had recently fallen, so Daniel hoped for the early restoration of his people. In answer to his prayer, the angel Gabriel made an announcement that clearly has implications far wider than the mere restoration of the Jews to their native land. In one sentence he outlined God's plan for the salvation of all mankind, and declared that within a specified period of Jewish history, God would make all necessary provision for dealing with sin in general: "Seventy weeks of years are decreed concerning your people and your holy city, to finish the transgres-

sion, and to make an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place (or one)" (v. 24). Before discussing the time period, it is well to consider whether, and at what time, these six items regarding the atonement for sin were accomplished.

1. The Six Items

(i) *To finish the Transgression.* As the marginal reading of the AV indicates, this means rather to *restrain* transgressions. The Hebrew word is the same as that used to describe Jeremiah being *shut up* in prison (Jer. 32: 2-3). We are to understand, therefore, that something would be done to restrict or limit the power of sin. This was fulfilled in the New Covenant which, it is explained in Hebrews 8: 6 and 9: 15-16, was ratified by the Blood of Christ on the Cross.

(ii) *To make an End to Sin.* This may mean that sins are to be removed or hidden away, in which case it also found fulfilment in the final clause of the New Covenant: "I will remember their sins no more" (Hebr. 8: 12). Alternatively, since the word for sin is often used for the sin offering, it could mean that an end would be made of sacrifices for sin. As Hebrews 9: 26 points out, this was also accomplished by the Crucifixion of Christ: "He has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Or again, as the New Covenant says, "I will remember their sins and their misdeeds no more. Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin" (Heb. 10: 17-18).

(iii) *To atone for Iniquity.* It is the foundation of the Christian gospel that "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15: 3). Or as John says, "He is the expiation for our sin, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2: 2). Or again, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them" (2 Cor. 5: 19). This third item was, therefore, also fulfilled when Christ was crucified.

(iv) *To bring in Everlasting Righteousness.* God alone is righteous, but as for man, Paul says, "there is none righteous, no not one. . . . For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law" (Rom. 3: 10, 20). But then he goes on to say, "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law . . . the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (Rom. 3: 21, 22). It is a fundamental doctrine of the

Christian faith that God attributes the righteousness of Christ to those who put their faith in His sacrifice on the Cross for their sins. Thus Paul speaks of "not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God that depends on faith" (Phil. 3: 9). Misunderstanding of this clause has arisen because many who think themselves Christians either do not know, or understand this basic doctrine, and so cannot see that Daniel's prophecy about "bringing in everlasting righteousness" alludes to justification by faith made possible by the Crucifixion.

(v) *To seal both vision and prophet.* Opinions are divided on the meaning of this clause. In the RSV it evidently means that by its fulfilment at the stated time, the authenticity both of this vision and of Daniel as a prophet, would be sealed or confirmed. Others suppose that visions and prophecies in general would be sealed up, or cease, with the coming of Christ. But since the Book of Revelation was written at a later date, this does not appear to be the correct solution.

(vi) *To anoint a most holy place.* The AV reads here "to anoint the most Holy", which is more accurate since there is no word in the Hebrew for "place". To anoint, in this context, means to consecrate for the service of God. The Hebrew phrase "*godesh gada-shim*" comprises two adjectives, elsewhere translated "most holy", as in Exod. 29: 37: "the altar shall be most holy", and in Ezek. 43: 12, "the top of the mountain shall be most holy." When used alone without qualifying a noun, it usually signifies the Holy of Holies, or most Holy Place of the inner Temple, but in this sense it always has the definite article, "*the* Holy of Holies". The article is lacking in Daniel 9: 24 which says literally "to anoint a most Holy", so the RSV adds the footnote "*thing or one*". "The coming of an anointed one, a prince," in the next verse explains what, or rather who, the most Holy One is, who is to be anointed within the seventy-week period. He is the Messiah, or Christ.

We have New Testament authority for equating "the anointed one" of Daniel 9 with Christ, for in John 1: 41 and 4: 25 it is stated that Messiah, the Hebrew for *anointed* in Daniel 9, is the equivalent of Christ. Jesus also, when reading in the synagogue from the prophet Isaiah, applied the word to Himself, when he read, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has *anointed* me to preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke 4: 18).

We see, then, that all six items listed in verse 24 were fulfilled at or before the time of the Crucifixion. The only conclusion to which we can come is, therefore, that the Crucifixion marked the end of Daniel's seventy weeks of years.

2. The Command to Restore Jerusalem

The event that was to mark the beginning of the seventy weeks period was described by the angel Gabriel as "the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" (v. 25). Originally such a "word" was given in Isaiah 44:28, where it is stated that Cyrus would say to Jerusalem "She shall be built; and of the temple, Your foundation shall be laid." Probably Daniel knew of this prophecy, and, since Cyrus had recently captured Babylon, he may have thought that it would shortly be fulfilled. The question is, when did this word "go forth". There are four possible answers, each of which must be carefully considered to discover which best fits the description given in the prophecy.

(a) *The Original Decree of Cyrus*

We are told in Ezra 1:1-4 (cf. 2 Chron. 36:22-23) that Cyrus, in the first year of his reign, issued a proclamation in writing, permitting the Jews to return to their land, and "to rebuild the house of the Lord, the God of Israel." But the terms of this decree, as quoted by Ezra, allowed the Jews to build only the Temple; nothing is said about building the city. Under its provision, a considerable number of Jews led by Zerubbabel returned to Jerusalem and, after dedicating an altar, began to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 3). This work was hindered by the foreigners who had been imported to Palestine by Esarhaddon. These "hired counsellors against them to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra 4:5).

(b) *The Decree of Darius, 520 B.C.*

In the second year of Darius, 520 B.C. (Ezra 4:24), the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began to exhort the people to resume work on the Temple. They told their enemies that authority for this had been given by Cyrus, so the latter wrote to the king enquiring whether this were true. In his reply, Darius confirmed the proclamation of Cyrus, and decreed that every assistance and provision be given to the Jews "for the rebuilding of this house of God" (Ezra 6:8 ff.). This decree, therefore, like the first, said nothing

about rebuilding the city. Finally, we learn from Ezra 6:14-15 that work on the Temple was completed "by the command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia; and this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius," that is in March 515 B.C. Again nothing is said about the city or its walls having been built.

(c) *The First Decree of Artaxerxes, 458 B.C.*

On the first of Nisan, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes (480 B.C.), Ezra with a small party of Jews left Babylon to return to Jerusalem. They held a letter from the king authorising them to take money to buy offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem, but nothing is said in this letter about building either the Temple, the city or its walls. The most that can be said is that Ezra was authorised to re-establish the civic life of the city by appointing magistrates and judges (Ezra 7:25). In consequence, many expositors pass over this decree in favour of the second decree of Artaxerxes, where the building of the walls and gates is, at least, mentioned.

But there was evidently more in the mission of Ezra than appears at first sight. Inserted in the middle of Ezra, chapter 4, we find a record of further correspondence between the enemies of the Jews and the Persian monarchs: "In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. And in the days of Artaxerxes Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their associates wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia" (v. 6-7). Failing to realise that verses 6 to 23 form a parenthesis between a mention of Cyrus and Darius in verse 6, and a continuation about Darius in verse 24, most early commentators imagined that the two kings here named Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes were meant to be Cambyses and Smerdis who reigned between Cyrus and Darius, and that Ezra gave their names wrongly. It is now known that Ahasuerus is the Persian form of Xerxes who, with Artaxerxes, were the two kings who *followed* Darius. Thus the letters to these two kings are out of their chronological order in Ezra 4.

Now Ezra 4:11-16 is a copy of a letter to Artaxerxes which must have been sent after the return of Ezra in 458 B.C. but before the time of Nehemiah. In it the enemies of the Jews complain that the Jews were actually "rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city; they

are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations" (4: 12). After requesting the king to verify from his records that Jerusalem in time past had been the cause of much trouble, they concluded, "Be it known to the king that if this city is rebuilt and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom, or toll, and the royal revenue will be impaired." In his reply the king, having reassured himself of the bad reputation of Jerusalem, wrote, "Therefore make a decree that these men be made to cease, and that this city be not rebuilt, until a decree is made by me" (Ezra 4: 21). The narrative of the Book of Nehemiah makes it quite impossible that such an order could have been issued after Nehemiah's return. From this correspondence, therefore, there can be no doubt that a start had been made on rebuilding the city walls soon after Ezra's return. Somebody must have given authority for this.

Now according to Isaiah's prophecy, God had foretold about Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my pleasure: saying of Jerusalem, she shall be built; and of the temple, your foundation shall be laid" (Isaiah 44: 28). This was the original divine word on which Cyrus had acted. Again, the Lord said, "I have aroused him in righteousness, and I will make straight all his ways: he shall build my city, and set my exiles free, not for price or reward" (Isaiah 45: 13). According to Josephus this prophecy was shown to Cyrus who was so impressed that he at once gave the Jews leave "to return to their country, and to rebuild their city Jerusalem and the temple of God."¹ If the prophecy of Isaiah is accepted as the word of God, and the record of Josephus can be relied on, we must conclude that Cyrus actually decreed not only that the Temple should be built, but the city also.

In view of what we are told in Ezra 1, therefore, we must conclude that Zerubbabel received only a part of the original decree of Cyrus which related to the Temple, the remaining part concerning the city being either suppressed or otherwise held up. Since rebuilding the city and walls first began soon after Ezra's return, it is by no means unlikely that Ezra carried not only the published letter from Artaxerxes, but also the second part of Cyrus's decree. This, then, would be the "*going forth* of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" referred to in Daniel's prophecy. The original

¹ Josephus, *Ant.* XI, i, 2 (5-7).

word given by Isaiah was put into writing by Cyrus, but it did not *go forth* until 458 B.C.

(d) *The Second Decree of Artaxerxes, 445 B.C.*

Following the thwarting of Ezra's attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, word got back to Nehemiah in the court of the king that, "The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire" (Neh. 1: 3). It would be ridiculous to suppose that this referred to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar which took place a hundred and forty years earlier—so stale a piece of news could scarcely have caused Nehemiah to sit down and weep. It can refer only to the walls and gates recently erected by Ezra. Consequently Nehemiah, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (445 B.C.), obtained a fresh instruction from the king to the governors of the province, requesting them to supply timber for the restoration of the gates and walls. This letter can scarcely be described as a command to build the city, for it only revoked the previous prohibition on building. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as the starting date of the Seventy Weeks.

The Seventy Weeks

The foregoing review of the historical evidence has shown that "the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" occurred on 1 Nisan, 458 B.C. when Ezra set out from Babylon. The Atonement was completed when Christ, the Messiah, was crucified on 14th Nisan, A.D. 33, now generally accepted as the correct date. The interval is exactly four hundred and ninety solar years, although it might appear at first sight that the Crucifixion was a fortnight late. This is explained by the fact that the Babylonian and Jewish calendars were lunar, the first month of the new year coinciding with the new moon in the spring. Lunar tables show that in Babylon 1st Nisan fell on April 7 in 458 B.C., whereas in Jerusalem 14th Nisan in A.D. 33 was April 3. Since these dates are based on the Julian calendar which has an error of three days every four centuries, the difference, according to our Gregorian calendar, reduces to less than one day. Thus the Atonement was completed exactly on the last day of the four hundred and ninetieth solar year after Ezra had set out from Babylon with the remainder of Cyrus's decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

3. The First Seven Weeks

Having established the beginning and end of the seventy weeks in verse 24, verses 25 and 26 divide the period into three parts, and give details of events that were to take place in each.

Discordant Translations

In these verses, however, we are faced with two very different translations: the AV reads, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again and the wall in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off etc." The RSV, on the other hand reads, "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. And after sixty-two weeks an anointed one shall be cut off etc."

The two main differences between the AV and all modern translations are, first, the name Messiah has been changed to "an anointed one", and second, a full stop has been inserted between the seven and the sixty-two weeks, so making the anointed one come after seven weeks instead of after seven plus sixty-two. Authority for this altered punctuation is the Hebrew Massoretic text.

Now it must be realised that in ancient Hebrew there was no punctuation, hence Paul's emphasis on "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2: 15 AV). The AV follows the old Latin and Greek translations made from the Hebrew by the early fathers of the Christian church who, in their day, were able to consult the unpunctuated text. Guided, no doubt, by the Holy Spirit, as well as by well known Jewish tradition, they all coupled the seven with the sixty-two, making a total of sixty-nine weeks to the coming of the Messiah. On the authority of John 1: 41 and 4: 25, they understood Messiah to mean Christ, the Anointed One, and so left that word untranslated, just as they did the word Christ in the New Testament. Without exception they taught that the prophecy was fulfilled by the coming of Jesus Christ after sixty-nine weeks of years, that is 483 years.

It was not until the tenth century that the Massoretic Jews, who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and disliked the Christian application of this prophecy, inserted a full stop in the middle of the sentence, thus throwing it into total confusion. No fulfilment or application of the prophecy according to the Massoretic text has ever been successfully demonstrated, although some attempts have been made. "Messiah" has to be changed to "an anointed one" who appears already after forty-nine years. Then, because he could not have lived a further 434 years (sixty-two weeks) before being cut off, a second anointed one, alleged to be another Jewish priest, has to be introduced to fulfil this latter part of the prophecy. Thus one error leads to another, and our translators have now been persuaded by these Massoretic Jews not only to reject the authority of John's Gospel, but to remove all messianic content from the one and only prophecy to use the name Messiah, and from which that name was originally derived. In view of this absurdity, the text of the AV will be followed throughout the remainder of the prophecy.

Rebuilding the City

The text of the Authorised Version implies that during the first seven weeks, or forty-nine years, the city would be restored "even in troublous times", and it then says in verse 26 what would happen to the Messiah after the following sixty-two weeks. We have seen that shortly after the return of Ezra in 458 B.C., the Jews began to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, but work was held up on orders from Artaxerxes after he had received a denunciatory letter from the enemies of the Jews (Ezra 4: 7-23). These orders were reversed when Nehemiah arrived in 455 B.C., and under his supervision the walls and gates were restored while sentries kept guard. Then we are told, "The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few, and no houses had been built" (Neh. 7: 4). Thus we have no definite date when the building of the city was completed.

It seems, however, that it was not merely the buildings, but the whole civil and religious life of the city that was to be restored. The prophecy says, "the street shall be builded again." The street was commonly used as a public meeting place, and is symbolic of the civic life of the city. It is evident that Nehemiah was just as much concerned with this as with the actual bricks and mortar. Much of his book tells of the reforms he carried out, and the last of these, recorded in his final chapter, did not take place until over forty years after Ezra's return. Nehemiah's term of office as gover-

nor was initially for twelve years, from 455 to 533 B.C., after which he returned to Persia (Neh. 5: 14 and 13: 6). A long interval elapsed before his next visit, for meanwhile widespread corruption had set in. Tobiah, an Ammonite, was given accommodation in the Temple, there was open violation of the Sabbath, tithes had been allowed to lapse, and many mixed marriages had been contracted whose offspring were already old enough to speak a mixed dialect of Hebrew and foreign languages.

An approximation to the date of Nehemiah's final reformation can be made, for it took place while Jehoiada was high priest, one of whose sons had contracted a mixed marriage (Neh. 13: 28). Jehoiada was son of Eliashib who had become high priest about the time that Ezra died, and he held office forty years. Since Ezra died well after 458 B.C., Jehoiada cannot have become high priest until well after 418. However, we know from one of the Elephantine Papyri dated 407 B.C.,² that Johanan, son of Jehoiada, was already high priest a year or two before that date. Thus we are able to place Nehemiah's final reforms not long before 408, that is to say very near the end of the forty-nine years 458-409 B.C. This fact confirms the view that the first seven of the seventy weeks was occupied by the restoration of the city and its walls "even in troublous times", as the punctuation of the AV implies.

4. The Final Week (v. 26)

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself" (v. 26 AV). Both the AV margin and the RSV render the final clause "and shall have nothing." This evidently signifies that Christ would not receive the kingdom at that time, for the remainder of the verse goes on to foretell the destruction of Jerusalem. The words "cut off" probably alludes to the Crucifixion, for the Hebrew word is one generally used for anyone executed by judicial decree.

Some have taken this verse to say, "At the end of threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off," but that is not what the text says, neither can the word "after" be construed to mean "at the end of," but rather "an indefinite time after." Two circumstances in the prophecy itself show that it does not mean immediately after. First, it is said in the previous verse that the sixty-two weeks extend

² *American Journal of Theology* XIX, p. 361; A. E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (1923), No. 30, p. 108 f.; E. G. Kraeling, *Brooklyn Museum Aramaic Papyri* (1953), p. 104.

unto Messiah, that is to his manifestation, but it is not implied that he would be cut off at once on his appearing, nor is such a supposition reasonable. Secondly, in the following verse it is said that he would cause the oblation to cease "in the midst of the week", that is of the last week of the seventy. This could make no sense if he had been cut off immediately at the close of the sixty-two weeks.

The Destruction of Jerusalem

The remainder of verse 26 should be regarded as a parenthesis explaining the statement "he shall have nothing." It tells of events after the Messiah had been cut off at the end of the final week: "The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." The "people of the prince" were the Romans whose prince was Titus, son of the emperor. In A.D. 70 the Roman army, after a long and frustrating siege, got out of control and set fire to the Temple, in spite of all that Titus could do to restrain them. The destruction is, therefore, rightly attributed to "the people of the prince", rather than to the prince himself.

Following this the prophecy says that "the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" (v. 26 AV). A flood is an Old Testament symbol for an invading army (e.g. Nahum 1: 8). Thus Daniel foretold not only that Jerusalem would be destroyed by an invading army, but also that until the end of the age there would be wars, and the land would be desolate. This is clearer in the RSV which reads, "And to the end there shall be war; desolations are decreed."

5. The Covenant Confirmed (v. 27)

Verse 27 AV begins, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." The RSV and other modern translations say here, "And he shall make a strong covenant with many . . ." This is another faulty translation arising from the anti-messianic bias from which all these versions suffer. The Hebrew word is *gabar*, meaning strengthen or confirm, not *karath* which is normally used for making a covenant. The week referred to is the last of the seventy. For this reason "he", the subject of the sentence, cannot be the prince that shall come whose people were to destroy the city in A.D. 70, but the Messiah himself. There are, however, those who argue that "he" must refer to the last person mentioned, namely "the prince that shall come", but this is not necessary where a parenthesis intervenes.

The covenant to be confirmed is the New Covenant, for concerning Jesus Christ we read in Hebrews 9: 15, "He is the mediator of a new covenant." It should be observed that the Mosaic covenant was ratified by burnt offerings and peace offerings (Exod. 24: 5). The seventieth week symbolises our Lord's sinless life in consequence of which He could offer Himself both as a burnt offering, as well as a sin offering, and say, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26: 28). In view of this Christ was called "the messenger of the covenant" in Malachi 3: 1.

6. The Daily Sacrifice

"And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." It is important to realise that what is called "the sacrifice and oblation" is not a sacrifice for sin, but is the same as the "daily sacrifice" mentioned in Daniel 8: 11-13. There we were told that the Prince of the host, namely Jesus Christ, was to take away the daily sacrifice; here we learn *when* this was to be done. There is, however, no reason to suppose that all the old sacrifices and offerings were to be rendered void at the same moment in time. A wide variety of sacrifices and offerings were prescribed in the Old Testament, each related to a particular aspect of the law on the one hand, and to the ultimate substitutionary offerings made by Christ on the other.³ It is essential to understand these relationships if we are to discover at what particular point in His ministry the daily sacrifice ceased to be valid.

There are, in general, two aspects of the law, the positive and the negative. The positive is embodied in the statement, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart. . . . This is the great and first commandment. A second is like it, You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 22: 37-39). The negative aspect "You shall not . . ." is the rule in most of the ten commandments. Now the burnt sacrifice and the cereal offerings are related to the first and second commandments of the positive law. The sin and trespass offerings are related to the negative aspect of the law. These basic sacrifices form the basis for a number of others, such as the daily sacrifice which was a combination of the burnt sacrifice and the cereal offering, called in Daniel 9: 27 "the sacrifice and oblation". (Compare Exod. 29: 38-42 and Num. 28: 1-6, with Levit. 1: 10 and 2: 1.)

³ A. Jukes, *The Law of Offerings*.

In the burnt sacrifice the carcase was burnt on the altar, whence it went up to heaven in smoke, symbolising the dedication of the worshipper to God. It was used throughout Old Testament times as an act of worship and dedication (e.g. Gen. 8: 20-21). Both this and the cereal offering had their New Testament fulfilment when our Lord dedicated His life and ministry, saying, "Lo, I have come to do thy will" (Hebr. 10: 9).

The ritual for the sin offering was quite different, for "the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood" (Hebr. 13: 11-12, cf. Lev. 4: 12). When Jesus died on the cross outside Jerusalem, He offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin, but clearly He did not at that time dedicate His life to the service of God and His neighbour. He did that when He began His ministry and was baptized. It follows, therefore, that the daily sacrifice, symbolising dedication to God, ceased to be valid from the very beginning of our Lord's ministry, whereas the sacrifices for sin were not rendered void until He was crucified.

Now our Lord's baptism took place in the autumn of A.D. 29, three and a half years before the Crucifixion. Thus the daily sacrifice was rendered obsolete exactly in the middle of the final week of Daniel's prophecy.

7. Subsequent Desolations

The difficulty with the second half of verse 27 lies not so much in what is predicted, as in the translation. Almost every version gives a different rendering, the AV with its marginal readings alone providing no less than three alternatives. The RSV reads, "And upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator." This could well apply to Titus who, following the desecration of the Temple by the Jewish zealots, made the city desolate in A.D. 70. The AV, on the other hand, reads, "For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." From this it would appear that it is the Messiah who decrees that the city shall be made desolate until the end of the age. It was conceded even by the

Jewish historian Josephus that Titus was carrying out divine retribution on the sinful city.⁴

Summary and Conclusions

This prophecy as a whole, as with all Daniel's other prophecies, looks forward to the end of the Christian era, but is particularly concerned with a period of seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years of Jewish history at the end of which the Messiah would appear to make atonement for sin, thus doing away with the need for the Old Testament sacrifices. The seventy weeks began with "the going forth of the word" to restore Jerusalem, brought by Ezra in the spring of 458 B.C., and ended with the Crucifixion in the spring of A.D. 33. In the event, Christ was manifested during the last week of seven years, and thus fulfilled the prophecy in His life and death.

Many differing interpretations of the prophecy have been put forward. Apart from the chaos caused by the Massoretic punctuation in verse 25, another reason for this has been the failure of some writers to understand the different facets of the Christian doctrine of Atonement, particularly those pre-figured in the daily sacrifice. Whereas it is widely understood that in regard to the negative law, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many," on the positive side He fulfilled in His life all righteousness on our behalf. He "gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Hebr. 9: 28). This He did at His baptism in the autumn of A.D. 29, at the same time rendering the daily sacrifice obsolete. Finally, yet another feature foreseen in the prophecy is the ratification of the New Covenant. Those unacquainted with Christian doctrine would naturally not be able to understand these matters.

⁴ Josephus, *Jewish War* IV, v. 2 (323) (Penguin, p. 249); and VI, ii, 1 (110) (Penguin, p. 333).

CHAPTER TEN

DANIEL'S LAST PROPHECY

Daniel's final prophecy, extending through the last three chapters, covers the history of the Holy Land from the time of Cyrus, king of Persia, down to the present day, and finally looks forward to the return of Jesus Christ and the day of judgement. It divides into three parts, corresponding roughly with the chapter divisions:

10: 1 - 11: 1 Introduction.

11: 2 - 12: 4 Prophecy of Future Events.

12: 5 - 12: 13 Associated Time Periods.

In the Introductory chapter, Daniel tells us that, after seeking the Lord for three full weeks, he saw in a vision a man clothed in linen who told him he had come "to make you understand what is to befall your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come" (10: 14). Thus, although a large part of the prophecy was fulfilled before the time of Christ, the purpose of the revelation was to make known what was to happen "in the latter days", that is in the Christian era. At the close of the prophecy in 12: 4, Daniel was told to "shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end." As we have seen in chapter 8 §3, "the time of the end" is Daniel's term for the fifth period of history which follows the fall of the Roman empire, and was represented by the feet of the image in chapter 2. Daniel's last prophecy, therefore, was to be a sealed book until the Roman empire had fallen, that is to say that it would not be understood during the first twelve, or even fourteen centuries of the Christian era. This has important implications.

Regarding the first thirty verses of chapter 11, there has never been any mystery. Even secular historians agree that this section corresponds closely with the known facts of the history of the

Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties of Syria and Egypt down to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes who died in 164 B.C. Over the remaining fifteen verses, however, there has always been controversy. Although the early Christian church could see that in many ways this passage might be applied to Antiochus Epiphanes, there were details unfulfilled by him which suggested a future application. This led them to regard the "Wilful King" (v. 36-39) and the "King of the North" (v. 40-45) as alluding to a future Antichrist. Porphyry, a third century opponent of Christianity, on the other hand, regarded the whole chapter as a fraud written about 165 B.C.

The statement that the book was sealed till the time of the end, repeated again in 12: 9, implies that all these early opinions would have been erroneous. In the seventeenth century, however, a fresh historical application of the last fifteen verses was put forward, first by Thomas Brightman and Joseph Mede, followed later by Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Thomas Newton and others. This does not necessarily mean that their interpretations were entirely correct, but it does condemn the futurist notion of a coming Antichrist, so widely taught today, as well as the so-called modernist view that the Book is a fraud which was held by Porphyry in the third century.

Chapter 11 divides naturally into two parts, the first thirty verses being fulfilled before Christ, the second during the Christian era. It will be recalled that our Lord, in His great prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives, said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place . . . then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains" (Matt. 24: 15-16 AV). This evidently refers to the prediction in Daniel 11: 31 (AV), where he says that, "They shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." From what our Lord said, this verse could not have been fulfilled before His day, so its fulfilment must fall in the Christian era. We have already seen in chapter 9 that the daily sacrifice was rendered void by Jesus Christ, and ceased to be offered after the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, so it follows that Daniel 11: 31 marks the beginning of the Christian era.

In spite of this, it is widely believed that verses 31 to 35, at least, were fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes. This confusion has been caused by the author of the First Book of Maccabees. He had obviously read Daniel's book, for he correctly names those saved from the fiery furnace, and alludes to Daniel's deliverance from the

lions (1 Mac. 2: 59-60). He was evidently aware that Daniel 11, at least as far as verse 30, had already been fulfilled in his day, for he begins his history with Alexander the Great, the mighty king of Daniel 11: 3, from whom he derives Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Mac. 1: 10). He had probably noticed that Daniel 11: 20-30 accurately described the career of this king, and then jumped to the conclusion that the next verse was fulfilled also by him. This says, "Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate." This could imply that "forces", or an army sent by Antiochus would cause the daily sacrifices to cease and set up an "abomination of desolation".

Now a careful comparison between the First and Second Books of Maccabees reveals that the historical facts have been distorted in the First Book to make them appear as a fulfilment of Daniel's prophecies. It is true that Antiochus did send an army to Jerusalem led by Apollonius (2 Mac. 5: 24-26), but they did not do those things predicted in Daniel 11: 31. It is true that the sacrifices were interrupted, and a pagan shrine set up, not by the army of Apollonius, but later by an aged Athenian (2 Mac. 6: 1-5). This significant fact has been suppressed in 1 Maccabees.

A further distortion is to be found in 1 Maccabees 4: 52, where it is made to appear that the temple sacrifices had ceased for a period of three years ending in year 148 of the Seleucid Era (cf. 1 Mac. 1: 54), so as to agree with Daniel 9: 27 which says, "for half of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and offering to cease." Since he knew that the sacrifices had both ceased and been resumed in the ninth month, the author had to make it three years exactly, instead of three-and-a-half. But 2 Maccabees 10: 3 says they were resumed after only *two* years, which must be correct because news of their resumption reached Antiochus well before he died (1 Mac. 6: 7), and from Babylonian sources we now know he died before the ninth month of 148 S.E. (164 B.C.). So to get round the difficulty, the author of 1 Maccabees was forced to place his death in 149 S.E., a year late, thus giving him a reign of twelve years instead of eleven. Josephus and later historians have all copied these errors.

This close correspondence between 1 Maccabees and Daniel has for centuries led to the belief that Daniel was written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and that it falsely claimed to have predicted events down to about 165 B.C., after which its predictions

went astray, thus dating the Book to about that time. But since the account in 1 Maccabees, and particularly its chronolgy, have clearly been manipulated to make it agree with Daniel, that theory is no longer tenable. On the contrary, the evidence shows that Daniel must have been written before 1 Maccabees, so there remains no reason to doubt that it is a genuine prophecy written, as it claims, in the sixth century B.C.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WARS IN THE HOLY LAND

The prophecy in chapter 11 is given in plain language and requires no interpretation. All that is necessary is to understand what is meant by the king of the north, and the king of the south. As explained in verses 2 to 5, these are the ruling dynasties in Syria and Egypt.

1. Persia and Greece, 538-300 B.C. (v. 2-5)

In the introductory paragraph, we are told that, "Three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them; and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece" (v. 2). This prophecy was written in the time of Cyrus king of Persia (10: 1), shortly after Babylon fell. The three succeeding kings of Persia were Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius the Great, while the fourth, who was far richer than these, was Xerxes who, in 480 B.C., attacked Greece with a great army drawn from every part of his widespread empire. His expedition withdrew, however, after his navy had been defeated by the Athenians at the battle of Salamis. The Greek states then became united, and eventually became the leading world power under Alexander the Great. He is described in verses 3 and 4: "A mighty king shall arise who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven." We have already seen in chapter 8, §2, that Alexander's empire was divided after the death of his son into four kingdoms. But whereas Daniel 8 skips over the intervening years until the rise of Mohammed in the seventh century A.D., chapter 11 continues with an

account of two of the kingdoms that waged war in the Holy Land until the Romans came.

Within the context of Alexander's divided empire, chapter 11, verse 5 says, "Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he." The king of the south was Ptolemy who ruled not only Egypt, but through his strong navy had been able to annex Phoenicia, Cyprus, and many other Mediterranean islands. "One of his princes" evidently means another of Alexander's generals, namely Seleucus who ruled Syria. He was even stronger than Ptolemy, for by 301 B.C. he had taken possession of the greater part of Alexander's empire, including most of Asia Minor and eastwards as far as the borders of India. He built Antioch in Syria as his capital city, naming it after his father, and founded a dynasty known as the Seleucids; their names were invariably either Seleucus or Antiochus. Ptolemy likewise founded a dynasty which ruled in Egypt whose names were always Ptolemy. These dynasties are called the king of the north and the king of the south until both were conquered by the rising power of Rome.

2. The Laodicean Wars, 300-223 B.C. (v. 6-9)

Following the establishment of the Seleucid empire in 301 B.C., the kings of Syria had already been engaged in two wars with Egypt within half a century, when Ptolemy II secured what appeared to be a diplomatic victory. He induced Antiochus II to divorce his wife Laodice and disinherit her two sons, in order to marry his own daughter Berenice. The idea was that their offspring would then inherit and rule over their united empires, thus securing lasting peace. To make the bargain even more attractive, Berenice was to be given a magnificent dowry. At first all went according to plan, for Antiochus sent his wife and children away to Ephesus. Berenice duly arrived from Egypt with her dowry, the marriage took place, and in course of time a son was born. But in 246 B.C. Ptolemy died, and Antiochus took back his former wife Laodice. She, no longer trusting her husband, and wishing to secure the kingdom for her son, promptly poisoned him, and then sent her son Seleucus to Antioch to murder the second wife Berenice and her child. Apparently Berenice got news that the assassins were on the way, so she shut herself up in a fortress where she obtained the support of her loyal subjects. But, in spite of these precautions, through some treachery both she and her child were murdered.¹

¹ CAH VII, p. 715 f.; Appian XI, 65; Justin XXVII, 1.

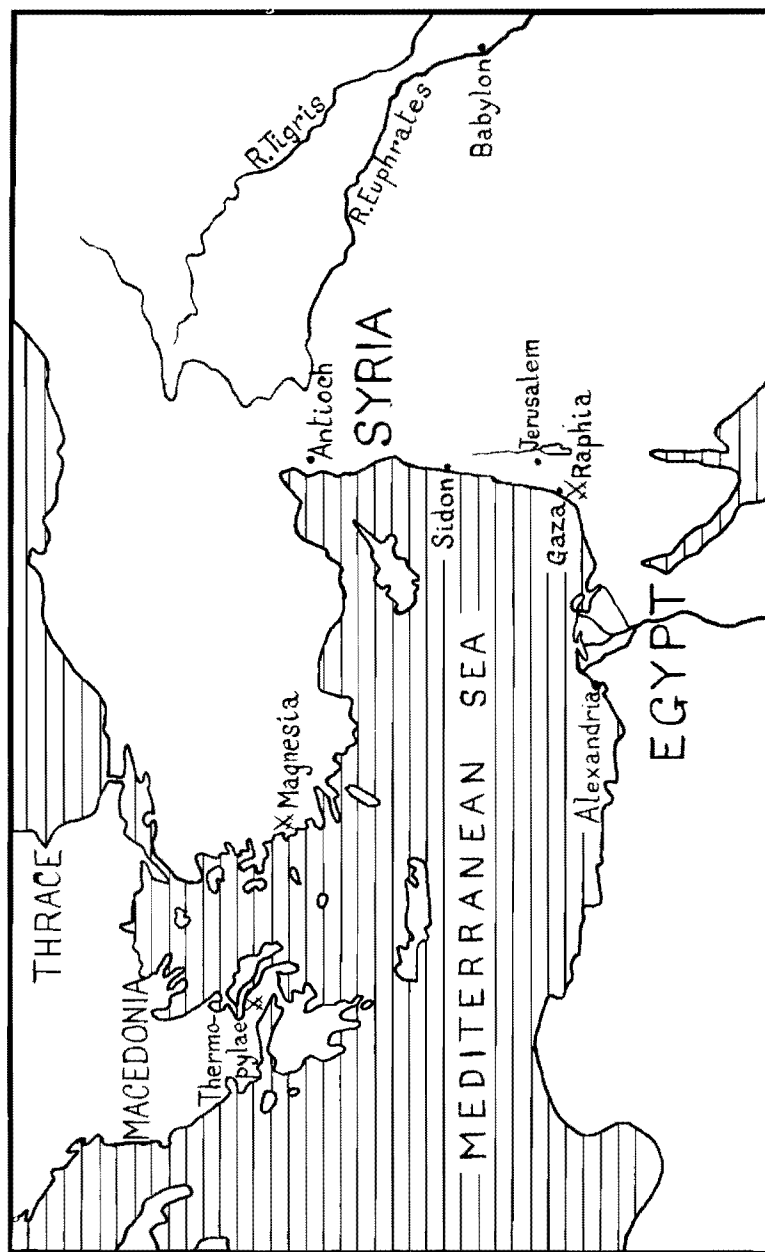
Meanwhile Berenice's brother Euergetes, who had succeeded to the throne of Egypt as Ptolemy III, heard of his sister's peril, and set out for Syria with a great army to rescue her. He knew nothing about her having been murdered, and her friends continued to conceal the fact that Berenice and her son were dead until Ptolemy and his army had arrived. Then Ptolemy himself continued to keep up the deception so that he could issue letters in the name of the queen saying that he was to be favourably received. Whether by this means, or because the people, having heard of this foul murder, were incensed against Seleucus, Ptolemy Euergetes was able to conquer Asia as far east as Babylon.² This victory came to nothing, however, because he was suddenly recalled to Egypt to deal with trouble at home. Nevertheless he did manage to take with him a great deal of treasure, as well as two thousand images of Egyptian gods, said to have been captured by Camyses, king of Persia, when he conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. After this Seleucus was able to re-establish himself in Syria.

These are the historical facts that had been foretold by Daniel in chapter 11, verses 6 to 9, but without the names, here supplied in brackets: "After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south (Berenice) shall come to the king of the north (Antiochus) to make peace: but she shall not retain the strength of her arm (for Antiochus left her) and he (Antiochus) and his offspring shall not endure (for Laodice poisoned them): but she (Berenice) shall be given up (murdered) and her attendants, her child, and he who got possession of her (her supporters in Antioch). In those times a branch from her roots (her brother Euergetes) shall arise in his place (Egypt); he shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their molten images and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north."

3. Antiochus the Great (v. 9-20)

When Seleucus died in 227 B.C., he left two sons, Seleucus and Antiochus. Although the elder began preparations for another war, he was soon assassinated and was followed in 223 by his brother

² CAH VII, p. 717; Appian XI, 65; Polyaeus, *Strategems* VIII, 50.



The King of the North—Syria, versus The King of the South—Egypt.

Antiochus, later called "the Great".³ In 221 Ptolemy Euergetes was succeeded by Ptolemy IV, called Philopater. He was much addicted to wine and women, but he had an astute Prime Minister, Sosibius, who, when Antiochus was marching south through Palestine in 219, scared him off by spreading a rumour that a large Egyptian army was awaiting him.⁴ He then kept Antiochus occupied with endless peace negotiations, while at home he secretly trained a large army. This is covered by verse 9: "Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land."

Eventually, when Antiochus had reorganised his forces he marched on Egypt, and the two armies met in battle at Raphia, south of Gaza, in 217, when the Egyptians were victorious.⁵ This is foretold in Daniel 11: 10-12: "His (Seleucus II's) sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on and overthrow and pass through, and again (in 217) shall carry the war as far as his fortress. Then the king of the south, moved with anger, shall come out and fight with the king of the north (at Raphia); and he (Antiochus) shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his (Ptolemy's) hand. And when the multitude is taken, his (Ptolemy's) heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail." Although the Syrian army suffered heavy losses, Ptolemy did not take advantage of his victory, but returned to his life of luxury at home.

The Battle of Panion

About fourteen years after the battle of Raphia, Ptolemy IV died, leaving a child five years of age to inherit the throne. Taking advantage of this, Antiochus made a secret pact with Philip of Macedonia for the partition of Egypt,⁶ and then marched south through Palestine where the Jews gave him every assistance. The Egyptians under their general Scopas counter-attacked, but in 198 B.C. Antiochus defeated them at Panion near the source of the Jordan.⁷ This Daniel foretold in verses 13 and 14: "For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude greater than the former; and after some years he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies. In those days many shall rise against the king of

³ CAH VII, p. 723; Appian XI, 66.

⁴ CAH VII, p. 729; Justin XXX, 1-2.

⁵ CAH VII, p. 730.

⁶ CAH VIII, p. 160.

⁷ CAH VIII, p. 165.

the south; and the men of violence among your own people (the Jews) shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision; but they shall fail." These Jews were hoping to free themselves from Egyptian rule.

Following this victory at Panion, Antiochus went on to besiege general Scopas in Sidon and, although three famous generals were sent from Egypt to set him free, Scopas was finally forced by famine to surrender.⁸ Thus control of Palestine passed from Egypt to Syria. This Daniel covers in verses 15 and 16: "Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks, and take a well-fortified city (Sidon). And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his picked troops (the three generals), for there shall be no strength to stand. But he (Antiochus) who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him (in Palestine); and he shall stand in the glorious land, and all of it shall be in his power."

War with the Romans

Having taken Palestine, Antiochus had visions of re-conquering the whole of Alexander's empire. Moving west through Asia Minor, he crossed into Europe in 196 B.C. with a view to capturing Macedonia, but the Romans, at that time a rising power, were there first. Meanwhile, in order to keep the boy king Ptolemy under his control, Antiochus forced him to marry his daughter Cleopatra.⁹ But this did not work out as he expected, for she later sided with the Romans against him. Daniel predicted this in verse 17: "He (Antiochus) shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and shall bring terms of peace (to Ptolemy) and perform them. He shall give him the daughter women (Cleopatra) to destroy the kingdom (i.e. weaken Egypt); but it shall not stand or be to his advantage."

In Greece the Romans were annoyed by Antiochus's demand for territory in Europe and, when he refused to withdraw, they attacked and defeated him in battle at Thermopylae in 191 B.C.¹⁰ Antiochus was obliged to return home to muster a fresh army, but in vain, for this too was decisively routed at Magnesia on the west coast of Asia Minor in January 189 B.C. After this victory the Romans

⁸ CAH VIII, p. 165 f.

⁹ CAH VIII, p. 186 f., 199.

¹⁰ CAH VIII, p. 213 f.

imposed harsh peace terms on Antiochus, demanding fifteen thousand talents, three thousand to be paid at once, and the remainder in twelve annual instalments. Antiochus was also to send twelve selected hostages to Rome, including his younger son Antiochus, later called Epiphanes.¹¹ Two years later Antiochus the Great was killed while plundering a temple in Persia. His conflict with the Romans was foretold in Daniel 11:18-19: "Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands (of Greece), and shall take many of them; but a commander (Roman) shall put an end to his insolence; indeed he shall turn his insolence back upon him. Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall and shall not be found."

Antiochus was succeeded by his elder son Seleucus IV, whose reign of eleven years was almost entirely devoted to raising money to pay the thousand talents a year to the Romans. In 2 Maccabees 3, it is recorded that he sent his chancellor, Heliodorus, to Jerusalem to rifle the Temple treasury. Not long after this, Heliodorus murdered his master, hoping either to become king himself, or at least to reign as regent on behalf of the king's baby son. The reign of Seleucus IV and his assassination are foreseen in Daniel 11:20: "Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute through the glory of the kingdom; but within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle."

4. Antiochus Epiphanes (v. 21-30)

Demetrius, elder son of Antiochus the Great, and heir to the throne, had been sent to Rome in 176 B.C. as a hostage in exchange for his uncle Antiochus Epiphanes. It was while the heir, still a boy, was absent, that Heliodorus took the opportunity to assassinate Seleucus IV to further his ambitious aims. Apart from Demetrius, the rightful heir, there was also Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus the Great, who also entertained thoughts that her son Ptolemy VI of Egypt had a claim to the throne. Nevertheless Antiochus Epiphanes outwitted all his rivals, and persuaded the king of Pergamum to conduct him to the throne of Syria with his army. Even so, "it required a good deal of dexterity and intrigue on the part of Antiochus for him to establish his position."¹² This he did, not only by a lavish distribution of gifts, but also in accepting bribes.

¹¹ CAH VIII, p. 223-226.

¹² CAH VIII, p. 497 f.

The accession of Antiochus Epiphanes is described in Daniel 11: 21-22 thus: "In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given; he shall come in without warning (peaceably, AV) and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, and the prince of the covenant also." The "prince of the covenant" was evidently the High Priest, Onias, for Antiochus sold his office to Jason (2 Mac. 4: 7-8). But in the next verse Daniel says, "From the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully." So it was, for Antiochus treated Jason badly, selling the High Priesthood shortly afterwards to a higher bidder named Menelaus (2 Mac. 4: 23-27).

Having gained possession of a fertile and flourishing kingdom with the aid of a small neighbouring country, he appears to have been generous to his heathen gods. It is recorded of him that "in the honours he paid to the gods, he far surpassed all his predecessors, as we can tell from the temple of Olympian Zeus at Athens, and the statues round the altar at Delos."¹³ As Daniel foretold, "He shall become strong with a small people. Without warning (peaceably, AV) he shall come into the richest parts of the province; and he shall do what neither his fathers, nor his father's father have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods" (v. 23-24).

Wars with Egypt

Antiochus Epiphanes was engaged in two wars with Egypt,¹⁴ the first being foretold in Daniel 11: 25-28: "He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him. Even those who eat his rich food shall be his undoing; and his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain" (v. 25-26). In 169 B.C. Antiochus invaded Egypt, and Ptolemy was not only defeated but taken prisoner, betrayed by his friends who placed his younger brother on the throne in Alexandria.¹⁵ "And as for the two kings (Antiochus and Ptolemy) their minds shall be bent on mischief; they shall speak lies at the same table" (v. 27). Antiochus pretended to take sides with Ptolemy against his younger

¹³ Polybius XXVI, i, 11.

¹⁴ 2 Maccabees 5: 1.

¹⁵ CAH VIII, p. 505.

brother, agreeing to restore him to the throne, but his real motive was to leave Egypt weak with two rival kings fighting each other. "But to no avail; for the end is yet to be at the time appointed" (v. 27), for when Antiochus had returned home, the two brothers agreed to rule Egypt jointly.

"And he (Antiochus) shall return to his land with great substance, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant; and he shall work his will and return to his own land" (v. 28). The First Book of Maccabees relates that, "On his return from the conquest of Egypt in the year 143 (169 B.C.), Antiochus marched with a strong force against Israel and Jerusalem. In his arrogance he entered the temple and carried off the golden altar, the lampstand," and other temple treasures, "and took them all with him when he left for his own country" (1 Mac. 1: 20-24).

In the following year, 168 B.C., Antiochus made his second expedition against Egypt, foretold in Daniel 11: 29-30: "At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south; but it shall not be this time as it was before. For the ships of Kittim shall come against him." Kittim was the general term for the coasts of Italy, Greece, and the Mediterranean islands. Here the ships of Kittim brought ambassadors from Rome to tell Antiochus to keep his hands off Egypt. When first presented with this ultimatum, Antiochus replied that he would think it over, but the Roman drew a circle in the sand around the king, and demanded an answer before he stepped out of it. Antiochus agreed and withdrew, and thus acknowledged the supremacy of Rome.¹⁶

Daniel continues: "And he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant" (v. 30). Two separate events are foretold here: first he would be "enraged and take action against the holy covenant," and second, "give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant." The first was fulfilled in 167 B.C. when Antiochus sent an army under Apollonius to plunder Jerusalem and set up a garrison there (1 Mac. 1: 29-40; 2 Mac. 5: 24-27). The second was fulfilled when later in the same year he sent an aged Athenian who, aided by those Jews who had adopted Greek customs, finally polluted the Temple by setting up a shrine dedicated to Olympian Zeus (1 Mac. 1: 41-61; 2 Mac. 6: 1-7).

¹⁶ CAH VIII, p. 506 f.; Appian XI, 66; Justin XXXIV, 3.

5. The Roman Period (v. 31-35)

Thus far the agreement between Daniel 11 and its fulfilment in the history of Syria and Egypt is so exact that secular historians, and some theologians, have thought that the prophecy was written after the events foretold. But after making this assessment, many have gone on to make the same mistake as the author of 1 Maccabees, who assumed that verse 31 continues to describe the career of Antiochus Epiphanes. He said that the army under Apollonius defiled the Temple (1 Mac. 1: 37), but 2 Maccabees says nothing to that effect. Both Books agree, however, that pagan sacrifices were introduced by other agents sent by the king (1 Mac. 1: 44; 2 Mac. 6: 1-2), contrary to Daniel 11: 31 which specifically states that "forces" (or "arms", AV) would profane the sanctuary: "Forces from him shall appear and shall profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate."

The Hebrew preposition translated "from" him has a wide meaning, and could equally well be translated "besides", or "apart from" him. So *apart from* Antiochus Epiphanes, armed forces would appear which would profane the Temple and cause the daily sacrifices to cease. "And *they* shall set up the abomination that makes desolate." In the previous verse the singular pronoun "he" denoted Antiochus Epiphanes, so the plural "they" in this verse cannot refer to him, but to the "forces", or arms which, apart from him, would appear in Palestine.

It must be realised that since the defeat of Antiochus the Great at Magnesia in January 189 B.C., Syria had become tributary to the Romans, and its position as an independent power, called "the king of the north" had come to an end. It is for this reason that Seleucus IV and Antiochus Epiphanes are never given this title in Daniel's prophecy, for they were subject to the Romans. The latter is called only "a contemptible person" who would arise "in his place", that is in the realm of the king of the north. Now in verse 31 we are told that apart from him forces would appear which would profane the Temple. And Josephus confirms that on no less than four occasions before the beginning of the Christian era. Roman armies invaded the Temple precincts and polluted the sanctuary.¹⁷

¹⁷ Josephus, *Ant.* XIV, iv, 4 (72); XIV, vii, 1 (105); XIV, xvi, 3 (482-486); *War* II, iii, 2-3 (117) (Penguin, p. 118).

The ultimate fulfilment of this verse, however, did not take place until the war of A.D. 66-70, when Jewish revolutionary armies occupied the sanctuary. Their abominations reached their climax when a Jewish faction led by John of Gischala gained control of the inner Temple during the Passover of A.D. 70,¹⁸ and subsequently caused the daily sacrifices to cease in July,¹⁹ a few weeks before the Roman army finally broke through, and set fire to the Temple. This was the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy, "they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate". Not only was the Temple site made desolate, but the whole surrounding district was devastated by the Romans.

Josephus, who had seen Jerusalem both before and after A.D. 70, described how the Romans stripped the whole neighbourhood of trees to a distance of ten miles from the city in order to provide timber for their siege platforms. "The countryside like the City was a pitiful sight; for where once there had been a lovely vista of woods and parks there was now nothing but desert and the stumps of trees. No one—not even a foreigner—who had seen the old Judaea and the glorious suburbs of the City, and now set eyes on her present desolation, could have helped sighing and groaning at so terrible a change; for every trace of beauty had been blotted out by the war, and nobody who had known it in the past and came upon it suddenly would have recognised the place: when he was already there he would still have been looking for the City."²⁰

Verse 32 reads: "He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant; but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action." The meaning of the first half of this verse is difficult if taken out of its context, for it is not clear who is meant by the pronoun *he*. In fact, there appears to be no antecedent to whom *he* can grammatically be related. In the second half of the verse, however, two classes of people are being contrasted, namely those who reject God's covenant, and those who do know their God. If we take God as understood in connection with the covenant, it would follow that *he* refers to God, and the meaning is that God would seduce and so destroy His enemies by means of flattery or vain beliefs. The principle is similar to that in Romans 1: 18-32 regarding those who reject divine revelation; "God gave them up" to all manner of psychological perversions.

¹⁸ Josephus, *War* V, iii, 1 (98-105) (Penguin, p. 284).

¹⁹ Josephus, *War* VI, ii, 1 (93) (Penguin, p. 332).

²⁰ Josephus, *War* VI, i, 1 (6-9) (Penguin, p. 325).

This principle may be seen in operation among the residue of the Jews who rejected the true Messiah. In A.D. 132 they were deluded into following a false messiah, named Bar-Kochbar, whose name was also written Bar Kochab, meaning "son of a star". On account of this he claimed to fulfil the messianic prophecy in Numbers 24:17: "A star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel." With the support of Akiba, the leading Jewish Rabbi of the time, he quickly mustered an army of 200,000 men with which he took control of Jerusalem. The Romans were obliged to send a powerful force to restore their authority, and in A.D. 135 the revolt was suppressed and Bar Kochbar slain. No Jew was ever again allowed within sight of Jerusalem, which was razed to the ground, and a new Roman city with a temple dedicated to Jupiter was built in its place.

In contrast to this catastrophic end to those who rejected Christ, the prophecy goes on to describe the fortunes of "the people who do know their God". During the first century of the Christian era, the Gospel had been preached throughout the known world, while the second and third centuries are notable for the names of the early fathers who witnessed in defence of the faith against pagan philosophies. Thus Eusebius, in his *History of the Church*, observed: "At the time of which I am speaking, Truth again put forward many to do battle for her, and they, not only with spoken arguments but also with written demonstrations, took the field against the godless heresies. Among these Hegesippus was prominent."²¹ He goes on to quote from the *Defence of our Faith* by Justin Martyr, and *Heresies Answered* by Irenaeus. In these and other writings, many of which have been preserved to the present day, we find the basic tenets of the Christian faith being thoroughly thrashed out in verbal battles where Scripture quotation was the most powerful weapon. This phase of Church history is covered by Daniel's statement, "The people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. And those among the people who are wise shall make many understand" (v. 32, 33).

These early Christians naturally ran into trouble with the Roman authorities when they refused to make the prescribed sacrifices to the pagan gods. Although most of the Roman emperors were tolerant, a number of Christians died for their faith at the hands of local magistrates. But finally, in A.D. 303, during the reign of

²¹ Eusebius, *History of the Church* IV, 7 (Penguin, p. 160).

Diocletian, there came "The Great Persecution" to which *The Cambridge Ancient History* devotes a whole chapter.²² Actually Diocletian himself was against bloodshed, but Galerius, his second in command in the eastern provinces, issued an additional edict under which all men, women and children were to sacrifice to the pagan gods or pay the penalty of death. In 305 Diocletian abdicated, and Galerius succeeded him in the east, whilst Constantius Chlorus, a more tolerant ruler, governed the west. Thus in the eastern churches the persecution of Christians continued fiercely until 311 when Galerius, suddenly smitten with a horrible illness, issued an edict of toleration. On his death, however, which occurred within a few months, he was succeeded by Licinius and Maximin. The latter, ignoring the edict of toleration, continued the persecution until he was overthrown in battle two years later by Licinius. These persecutions of the early Church were foretold by Daniel in the second part of verse 33: "They shall fall by the sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days." It is confirmed by the contemporary testimony of Eusebius that the persecution included each of the modes predicted: some were beheaded, others burnt alive; many escaped into exile, but others were confined in prison and tortured with a view to forcing them to sacrifice to the heathen gods. Most churches were deprived of their places of worship, and had their copies of the Scriptures destroyed.²³

Meanwhile Constantine, son of Constantius Chlorus, having accepted Christianity as his own personal religion, had overcome all his rivals in the west, and became emperor in Rome. In 313, in agreement with Licinius, he issued a further proclamation, the Edict of Milan, which granted Christians freedom of worship throughout the empire, and decreed that their places of worship be restored to them.²⁴ In this way Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled. "When they shall fall, they shall receive a little help" (v. 34).

During the reign of Constantine, the example of a Christian emperor made it not only easy, but fashionable for pagans to adopt the outward forms and profession of Christianity. This led to a large influx of nominal Christians to the Church. It has been reported that "in one year twelve thousand men were baptized at

²² CAH XII, ch. xix.

²³ Eusebius, *History of the Church* VIII, 2 (Penguin, p. 329).

²⁴ Eusebius, op. cit., X, 5 (Penguin, p. 401 f.); Gibbon II, p. 222.

Rome, besides a proportionable number of women and children",²⁵ but whether the report be true that each of these converts received twenty pieces of gold as an incentive from the emperor is unlikely. In addition to these, there were others who declared themselves Christians, but followed the example of Constantine, and postponed their baptism till they were dying, for the error was widely taught that baptism not only signified, but actually conferred both the forgiveness of sins and the renewal of man's moral nature.²⁶ Thus, explains Gibbon, "by the delay of their baptism they could venture freely to indulge their passions in the enjoyment of this world, while they still retained in their own hands the means of a sure and easy absolution."²⁷ It is, therefore, not surprising that Eusebius could speak in his day of "rapacious and unprincipled men who preyed on all classes of society", and deprecate "the scandalous hypocrisy of those who crept into the Church" and assumed the name of Christians.²⁸ Such conditions were foretold by Daniel at this time: "Many shall join themselves to them with flattery" (v. 34).

The fourth and fifth centuries were also remarkable for those in the church itself who gave their names to various heresies. A notable example is that of Arius, a presbyter of the church in Alexandria, who argued that Christ was the first of created beings, thereby denying His full Deity and equality with the Father. He obtained a considerable following which threatened to split the Church, so to avoid this, and to settle the dispute, Constantine convened a general Council which met at Nicaea in the year 325.²⁹ The Arian view was rejected by an overwhelming majority, and the Trinitarian doctrine, as expressed in the Nicene creed, was agreed in principle. Nevertheless Arian beliefs continued to be widely held, for example, by Constantine's own son Constantius who later became emperor.³⁰

About this time Ulphilas, the apostle of the Goths, also believed that "the Son was not equal or consubstantial with the Father". He "communicated these errors to the clergy and people, and infected the barbarian world with a heresy".³¹ The Visigoths, in

²⁵ Gibbon II, p. 242.

²⁶ W. Cunningham, *Historical Theology* I, p. 332.

²⁷ Gibbon II, p. 239.

²⁸ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* IV, 54.

²⁹ Gibbon II, p. 274.

³⁰ Gibbon II, p. 287.

³¹ Gibbon IV, p. 25.

the course of their westward migration across Europe, transmitted these errors to the various peoples with whom they came in contact, such as the Vandals, who later settled in North Africa, and persecuted the true Christians there. As we have seen, this led to a series of wars between the Arian nations and the officially trinitarian empire. These Arians might be regarded as a further class of those who "join themselves with flattery" (v. 34), but a prophecy in the following verse seems more applicable, since the Arian heresy originated within the Church: "And some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and to cleanse them, and to make them white, until the time of the end" (v. 35).

The important and lasting consequence of the Arian controversy was that it caused the Church to make a serious study of its theology. The Nicene creed was not finally drawn up until a second ecumenical Council had met in Constantinople in 381, since when it has been accepted by all orthodox Christian denominations. Those who still reject the Trinity today should note that this doctrine did not come from Rome, for almost all of the three hundred and twenty bishops who formed the Council of Nicaea were from Asiatic or Egyptian sees; only two presbyters represented the bishop of Rome.³² Neither was it imposed on the Church by Constantine, for he understood so little of the matter, that he later received baptism at the hands of the Arian bishop of Nicomedia.³³

The question of the Deity of Christ had hardly been settled when Nestorius and Eutyches questioned the nature of His Incarnation. This led to more searching of Scripture, and further ecumenical councils at Ephesus and Chalcedon in 431 and 451,³⁴ but not all churches could accept the formula agreed by the majority, and those dissenting separated themselves.³⁵ So the process of purifying and purging continued until the Saracens wiped out the African churches in the seventh century, and the Eastern churches almost suffered the same fate under the Turks in the eleventh century.³⁶ This purging, Daniel predicted, would continue "until the time of the end: for it is yet for the time appointed" (v. 35).

³² Milman I, p. 77.

³³ Gibbon II, p. 286.

³⁴ W. Cunningham, *Historical Theology* I, p. 307 f.

³⁵ Gibbon V, p. 49 ff.

³⁶ Gibbon VI, p. 25-30.

The term "time of the end" has already been discussed in chapter 8, §3, where we saw that it was connected with the fall of the Roman empire and the fulfilment of the vision of the Moslem little horn. It is an appointed time, and therefore not to be confused with "the consummation", or end of the age, for which no exact time has been set.³⁷ When we come to consider the time prophecies in chapter 12, we shall see that a time has been set for the end of the Roman empire as the dominant world power. In verse 40 of the present chapter its overthrow by the Turks "at the time of the end" is foretold. But meanwhile we must consider the intervening verses which relate to further important developments in the Christian Church under the Byzantine emperors.

6. The Byzantine Emperors (v. 36-39)

In the time of Constantine the capital of the empire had been removed from Rome to Byzantium which was re-named Constantinople, and after 364 there were two joint emperors reigning in Rome and Constantinople. In 313 Constantine had given freedom of worship to Christians through the Edict of Milan, but it was not until 380, under the eastern emperor Theodosius, that the Christian faith was legally established as the official religion of the empire.³⁸ The worship of pagan idols was then forbidden, and most of their shrines were destroyed, but in their place a new form of image worship arose in the Christian Church.

It had long been a tenet of Greek philosophy that the human soul, after it had been released from its earthly body at death, entered a more blissful existence in another world.³⁹ Christian converts had found no difficulty in grafting this idea on to their new faith, and they imagined that the spirits of the saints and martyrs in particular were already in heaven reigning with Christ. It was thought, says Gibbon, that "the enlargement of their intellectual faculties surpassed the measure of the human imagination; since it was proved by *experience* that they were capable of hearing and understanding the various petitions of their numerous votaries". Consequently, Christians came to direct their requests "to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the saint", and then, having received, as they thought, some answer to their prayers,

³⁷ See chap 9, §7 above.

³⁸ CMH IV (1966), p. 43.

³⁹ Plato, *Phaedo*, 107-8.

"they again hastened to the tombs of the martyrs to celebrate, with grateful thanksgivings, their obligations to the memory and relics of those heavenly patrons."⁴⁰

Thus a new form of religion sprang up in which God Himself was practically ignored. The people no longer turned to Him in prayer or praise, but diverted their petitions and thanks to the departed saints, and above all to the Virgin Mary, through the medium of icons, such as pictures or images, as well as to their bones and other worthless relics.

We have already observed in chapter 8, in connection with the appearance of the Moslem little horn at the beginning of the seventh century, that the worship of images had by then reached alarming proportions.⁴¹ Early in the eighth century, however, the emperor Leo III (717-741) assembled a council of bishops, and enacted with their consent a series of edicts suppressing the worship of images,⁴² but half a century later this was reversed by Irene, the widow of Leo IV.⁴³ They were suppressed a second time by Leo V in 815,⁴⁴ but finally restored again in 843 by Theodora, widow of the emperor Theophilus.⁴⁵ Verse 36 of chapter 11 seems to relate to this controversy. "The king," says Daniel, "shall do according to his will," on account of which he is often referred to as "the Wilful King". However, according to the usual practice in Daniel's prophecies, a king always denotes a succession of rulers, in this case the Byzantine emperors whose erratic behaviour in regard to the iconoclastic controversy might well be thought wilful and arbitrary.

The verse goes on to describe the position of the king, that is the Roman emperor, in relation to the Christian Church. In earlier pagan times the Roman emperor had been regarded as one of the gods,⁴⁶ but with the introduction of Christianity this attitude had to be modified. "Christians could not regard him as divine, or even of divine descent . . . they now thought of him as the chosen instrument of God, a man selected by Providence to become the

⁴⁰ Gibbon II, p. 144-146.

⁴¹ See page 95 above.

⁴² CMH IV (1966), p. 68; Gibbon V, p. 149.

⁴³ CMH IV (1966), p. 84; Gibbon V, p. 173.

⁴⁴ CMH IV (1966), p. 99; Gibbon V, p. 175.

⁴⁵ CMH IV (1966), p. 104; Gibbon V, p. 175.

⁴⁶ Gibbon I, p. 69.

divine representative on earth.”⁴⁷ In our study of the little horn in chapter 7, we noticed that the popes had later taken up a similar position, so it is not surprising to find a close similarity between the prophecies of the Roman little horn and that of the Wilful King. Just as the little horn was to “speak words against the Most High” (7:25), so also the Wilful King “shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods” (11:36). In fulfilment we saw that the pope claimed to be the “Vicar of Christ throughout the whole world”, and to have “universal jurisdiction both of spiritual things and of temporal”.⁴⁸ Similarly in the eastern sector of the empire “the Emperor was now raised above the Church, a position which gave him a number of prerogatives. For instance, he summoned councils, presided over them in person or through his officials, sanctioned decisions and published them in the form of decrees. He gave his own judgment on matters of discipline or liturgy, and had a predominating influence in the election of Patriarchs. He founded new episcopal sees and raised the rank and status of the already existing metropolitan sees, archbishoprics and bishoprics. In due course many emperors even tried to overrule the Church in matters of faith”,⁴⁹ his intervention in the iconoclastic controversy being an obvious example.

In his prophecy, Daniel says, “He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god” (v. 36), but here the Hebrew word *elohim*, translated god, probably signifies earthly judges and administrators of God’s law, for it is so used in several places in the Old Testament.⁵⁰ Understood in this sense, it agrees precisely with the conditions portrayed in history. The fact that a similar prophecy about the Papacy could also have been made in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 does not require that both prophecies must relate to the same person or power.

As with the Papacy, the rule of the emperors was to be cut short by divine judgement, for Daniel foretold that “He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished” (v. 36). It has been widely assumed that “the indignation”, or “time of wrath” is the period of God’s anger with Israel, but there seems to be no connection

⁴⁷ CMH IV B (1967), p. 104.

⁴⁸ See page 76 above.

⁴⁹ CMH IV B (1967), p. 105.

⁵⁰ T. Robinson, *Commentary on Daniel*, p. 248; cf. Exod. 21:6; 22:8, 9; Ps. 82:6.

with Israel here. In chapter 7, we saw that the Roman emperors prospered until judged by the “Ancient of Days”, when the beast, that is the Roman empire, was sentenced to death and its body destroyed (Daniel 7:9-11), a sentence carried out by the Turks. We have also seen in chapter 8, §3, that “the latter end of the indignation” (8:19) was the final judgement brought on the Roman empire through the onslaught of the Moslem little horn. The final clause of this verse—“for what is determined shall be done”—declares that what has been determined in these previous prophecies is going to be done at this time.

In verse 37 there are three negative clauses: “He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women; he shall not give heed to any other god.” The first clause, “He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers”, is rendered “the God of his fathers” in the AV. The Hebrew word *Elohim* usually means God in the Old Testament, although here it has been translated *gods* in the Septuagint. The word is always in the plural form, and it was used in verse 8 of this chapter to denote the gods of Egypt. Those who prefer this plural translation see a fulfilment in that the first Christian emperors ceased to worship the heathen gods of their ancestors. But it was long ago pointed out that “it is not mentioned to the honour, but to the reproach of the power here described, that he should forsake the religion of his ancestors, and in a manner set up a new religion”.⁵¹ As we have seen above, by giving support to the worship of icons of every kind, the later Byzantine emperors had set aside all direct approach to Christ, the God worshipped by the earlier Christian emperors. Thus the prophecy would be more in line with its context, if God is taken in the singular, as in the Authorised Version.

In the second clause the “one beloved by women”, or “the desire of women” (AV), has led some to look for some pagan god worshipped particularly by women. But it was the devout hope and desire of every woman in Israel, that she might become the mother of the Messiah, in fulfilment of the ancient prophecy in Genesis 3:15 about the seed of the woman who was to bruise Satan’s heel. The “desire of women” is, therefore, Christ, the Messiah, and this meaning endorses the first clause in saying that the Wilful King would pay no heed to Christ Himself.

⁵¹ Thomas Newton, *Dissertations on the Prophecies I*, p. 388.

The last clause of verse 37—"He shall not give heed to any god, for he shall magnify himself above all"—repeats what was said in verse 36, where the word *god* means earthly administrators of the law, both religious or secular. This confirms the previous prophecy that the Byzantine emperors were to assume the title of head of the Church as well as of the State.

In verse 30 the prophecy goes on to describe the new religion which the king would introduce—"He shall honour the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom his fathers did not know he shall honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts." Gold, silver and precious stones were the materials from which were made the images and mosaics that frequently adorned the rooves, walls and floors of many churches, an outstanding example being that of St. Sophia in Constantinople.

The worship of images or icons of various kinds was the prevailing feature of both the Roman and Byzantine churches. "Everywhere, not merely in the churches and monasteries, but in houses and in shops, on furniture, on clothes, and on trinkets were placed the images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the Saints. On these cherished icons the marks of respect and adoration were lavished: the people prostrated themselves before them, they lighted lamps and candles in front of them, they adorned them with ribbons and garlands, burned incense, and kissed them devoutly. Oaths were taken upon images, and hymns were sung in their honour; miracles, prodigies and marvellous cures were implored and expected of them."⁵²

The Authorised Version speaks here of "the god of forces". But "the god of fortresses" in the RSV is more accurate, for the Hebrew word *Mauzzim* is the same as that translated *fortress* in verses 7 and 10. The term is very suitable for icons, because they were supposed to possess miraculous defensive powers. "Everybody was convinced that by a mystic virtue the all-powerful images brought healing to the soul as well as the body, that they stilled tempests, put evil spirits to flight, and warded off diseases, and that to pay them the honour due to them was a sure means of obtaining all the blessings in this life and eternal glory in the next."⁵³

⁵² CMH IV, p. 5.

⁵³ CMH IV, p. 5.

Verse 39 continues, "He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god; those who acknowledge him he shall magnify with honour." For example, the fortress of Edessa was given for its protection the image or impression of the face of Christ on a piece of linen, and Gibbon says, "Its first and most glorious exploit was the deliverance of the city from the arms of Chosroes Nushirvan; and it was soon revered as a pledge of the divine promise that Edessa should never be taken by a foreign enemy. . . . After this important service the image of Edessa was preserved with respect and gratitude."⁵⁴ He goes on to relate that "the cities of Syria, Palestine and Egypt had been fortified with the images of Christ, his mother and his saints; and each city presumed on the hope or promise of miraculous defence."⁵⁵ A more recent historian informs us that "Cities looked for their safety much less to men's exertions than to the miraculous intervention of the patron saints who watched over them, to St. Demetrius at Thessalonica, St. Andrew at Patras, or the Mother of God at Constantinople."⁵⁶ This allocation of various patron saints to preside over particular regions or towns, explains the last clause of the prophecy relating to the Byzantine period: "He shall make them rulers over many, and shall divide the land for a price" (v. 39).

7. The Moslem Period (v. 40-45)

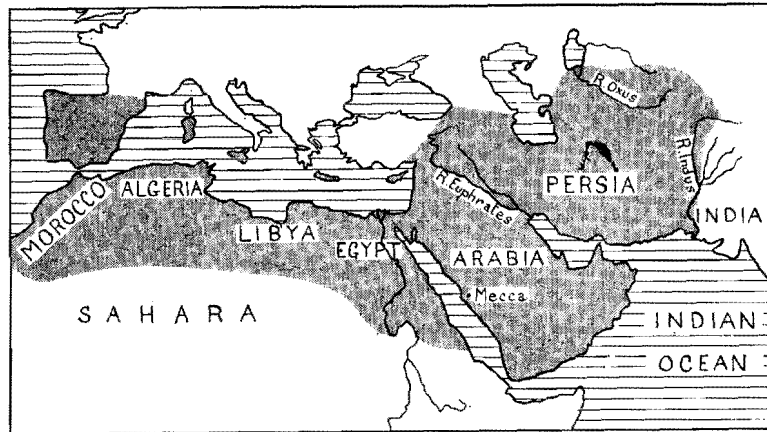
The last six verses of chapter 11 cover events that took place during the fifth period of history which was to follow the fall of the Roman empire, and is here called "the time of the end". Verse 36 said that the Wilful King was to "prosper till the indignation is accomplished", but God's judgement on the Byzantine empire covered a long period beginning with the Arab conquests in the south, and completed by the Turks in the north. So verse 40 tells us that "At the time of the end shall the king of the south attack him: but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind." Here the pronoun *him* must be taken to mean the Wilful King of the preceding verses. As we saw in chapter 8, the Mohammedan little horn was to be manifested "in the latter end of the indignation" (8:19), and at "the time of the end" (8:17).

⁵⁴ Gibbon V, p. 145.

⁵⁵ Gibbon V, p. 147.

⁵⁶ CMH IV, p. 5.

Although the Byzantine empire continued to be the dominant world power until the eleventh century, it began to be weakened from the seventh century onwards when a state of "Holy War" was declared by Moslems on the nominally Christian empire. In their eyes the latter was "the territory of warfare" which it was their religious duty to conquer and bring into submission.⁵⁷



THE KING OF THE SOUTH—the Arab Empire A.D. 700-1000

The Arabs became "king of the south" when they established an empire extending from Persia to North Africa and the Atlantic. They attacked and besieged Constantinople from 674 to 678, and again in 717-718, but each time failed to take the city.⁵⁸ Although they suffered defeats by the emperors Leo III and IV, raids on the empire were resumed by Harun al Rashid, whose army reached the shore of the Bosphorus in 782, forcing the empress Irene to pay tribute.⁵⁹ After Harun died in 809, family quarrels, and the infiltration of Turkish elements, led to their disintegration,⁶⁰ with the Arabs to the south and the Turks to the north.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Seljuk Turks came into conflict with the Byzantines, and in August 1071 the emperor

⁵⁷ CMH IV (1966), p. 696.

⁵⁸ CMH IV (1966), p. 31, 698.

⁵⁹ CMH IV (1966), p. 83; Gibbon, V, p. 417.

⁶⁰ CMH IV (1966), p. 701.

Romanus Diogenes was captured by Alp Arslan, following a decisive defeat at Manzikert (Malazkerd) in eastern Anatolia. "In this fatal day," wrote Gibbon, "the Asiatic provinces of Rome were irretrievably sacrificed",⁶¹ for in the following year the Turks overran most of Asia Minor. After that the Byzantine empire could no longer be regarded as a leading world power.

The Ottoman Turks struck the final blow when Murad I (1359-1389) and Bayezid (1389-1403) drove the Byzantines out of Asia Minor, and conquered a large part of south-east Europe. It was then that the prophecy was fulfilled: "the king of the north shall rush upon him (the Byzantine empire) like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through" (v. 40). The Turks were noted for their cavalry, and Gibbon, remarking on "the myriads of Turkish horse" that crossed the imperial frontier, says that Alp Arslan owed his victory at Manzikert to a force of forty thousand cavalry.⁶² The Ottoman Turks were similarly equipped: "All the troops of Othman had consisted of loose squadrons of Turkman cavalry."⁶³ The chariots mentioned in the prophecy may be an allusion to the "train of battering engines" used in sieges,⁶⁴ or the guns mounted on wheels, a recent invention which the Turks made great use of for the same purpose, particularly in their final assault on Constantinople. The invasion and conquest of the Balkan countries was not, of course, achieved without the use of many ships, and Bayezid I, surnamed "Lightning" because of the speed of his destructive march, stationed a large fleet at Gallipoli, not only to safeguard his own supply lines, but also to intercept help from Rome getting through to Constantinople.⁶⁵ However, this last stronghold of the once mighty Roman empire continued to hold out until it finally fell to the Turks in 1453.

The Wilful King of verse 36 having thus been eliminated, the prophecy goes on to describe the activities of the Turks who were now firmly established as king of the north. "He shall come into the glorious land, and tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part

⁶¹ Gibbon VI, p. 16.

⁶² Gibbon VI, p. 12-16.

⁶³ Gibbon VI, p. 293.

⁶⁴ Gibbon VI, p. 294.

⁶⁵ Gibbon VI, p. 300 f.

of the Ammonites" (v. 41). This was fulfilled in 1516-1517, when Selim I marched south through Palestine, "the glorious land", to conquer Egypt, leaving untouched those Arab lands east of Jordan known in biblical times as Edom, Moab and Ammon. These lands were, therefore, not included in a list of countries over which his successor Suliman the Magnificent claimed to rule,⁶⁶ and Joseph Mede, writing in the following century, confirms that the inhabitants of Arabia Petrea "were never yet provincials of the Turkish Empire."⁶⁷

"He shall stretch out his hand also against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt" (v. 42-43). History confirms that when Sultan Selim led his victorious army back from Egypt to Syria, "a thousand camels laden with gold and silver carried part of the rich spoils of war; and a more valuable portion had been sent by Selim on board the Ottoman fleet to Constantinople. This consisted of the most skilful artisans of Cairo, whom Selim selected . . . and removed to the capital of his empire."⁶⁸

Another important asset that Selim acquired while in Egypt was the Caliphate. He found there the last ruling Caliph of the Abbassid family, and "induced him solemnly to transfer the Caliphate to the Ottoman Sultan and his successors. At the same time, Selim took possession of the visible insignia of that high office, which the Abbassids had retained—the sacred standard, the sword, and the mantle of the Prophet."⁶⁹ This meant that Selim became the spiritual as well as the temporal ruler of the Moslems, so that without further need of military conquests, the Libyans (i.e. north Africa) and Ethiopians (southern Egypt) became his subjects. They "shall follow in his train", as the prophecy (v. 43) puts it. The whole of north Africa from Egypt to Algeria subsequently became part of the Ottoman empire.

The Turks continued to expand their territories in Europe until the latter half of the seventeenth century, when they came into conflict with the rising power of Russia. The prophecy says that "Tidings from the east and north shall alarm him, and he shall go

⁶⁶ CModH I, p. 95.

⁶⁷ Joseph Mede, *Works*, p. 674.

⁶⁸ E. S. Creasy, *History of the Ottoman Turks* (rev. edn., 1878), p. 151.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 150.

forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many" (v. 44). In his *History of the Turks* (p. 67), M. Philips Price records that "Between the years 1672 and 1914 there were twelve Russo-Turkish wars. In consequence of these wars the Turks were gradually pushed southwards, and the northern outposts of the Ottoman empire were occupied by the Russians. But this was accomplished only after heavy losses had been inflicted on the northern invaders."

These historical facts seem to provide a clear explanation of the prophecy, but there is another aspect that seems to be more in keeping with his going forth "with great fury", as well as the prediction that the little horn of chapter 8 was to be broken "by no human hand" (8:25). On several occasions bad news from the battle fronts in the east and north led to insurrection at home, followed by a ruthless slaughter of the insurgents. For example, when the Persians attacked Ottoman possessions in the east in



THE KING OF THE NORTH—the Ottoman Empire since A.D. 1700

1730, the news caused an uprising of the Janissaries in Constantinople. The Sultan was dethroned, and "it was not until two years later that order was restored in the capital by the bloody hunting-down of the rebels to which fifty thousand men fell victim."⁷⁰ Again in 1826 news that Turkey was obliged to surrender to Russia all its fortresses in Asia led to commotions in Constantinople "ending in the slaughter of the Janissaries, when 4,000 veteran but mutinous and unmanageable soldiers were shot or burned to death by order of the sultan himself in their own barracks in the city, and many thousands more all over the country."⁷¹ Also in 1876-77 the Turkish soldiery, in suppressing an insurrection in Bosnia, slaughtered fifteen thousand men, women and children in cold blood.⁷² The Turkish rulers seem to have "gone forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many" at home. This could well be another aspect foreseen in the prophecy.

The final phase of Turkish history, so far as it concerns Palestine, came in 1917. Until then the Turkish empire extended from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean which, from a Babylonian viewpoint, could be expressed in the words of verse 45: "He shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea (Persian Gulf) and the glorious holy mountain" (Jerusalem). The AV reads "He shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas (Dead Sea and Mediterranean) in the glorious holy mountain." This could apply to the Turkish occupation of Jerusalem until they were driven out by General Allenby. Five years later, in 1922, the Sultan abdicated, and the Moslem Caliphate was abolished; as Daniel said, "He shall come to his end with none to help him" (v. 45).

⁷⁰ C. Brockleman, *History of the Islamic People* (English Transl.), p. 338.

⁷¹ H. Grattan Guinness, *Light for the Last Days*, p. 144 f.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 151.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE END OF THE AGE

The first three verses of Daniel 12 are a continuation of the prophecy in the previous chapter, but since the whole of chapter 11 has now been fulfilled, and these three verses take us into the future, it is convenient to consider them separately. In verse 4 Daniel was told to "shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." We have already seen that this indicates that interpretations of this prophecy by the early Christian church are not to be relied on. The remaining verses 5 to 13 of chapter 12 form an appendix in which are given the time periods during which certain phases of the prophecy are to be fulfilled.

As we have seen, chapter 11 provides a continuous forecast of political events affecting Palestine, with particular reference to the Greek empire and the Moslem powers. It is noticeable that a disproportionate amount of space has been devoted to earlier events, and progressively less to the more distant future. Thus the first thirty verses relate to the five centuries before Christ, while fifteen verses are left to cover the whole Christian era, of which only two apply to the last four centuries. We may expect, therefore, that the three remaining verses in chapter 12 will provide even less detail about the future. They consist, in fact, of little more than a list of coming events in chronological order, which are dealt with at more length in other parts of the Bible.

1. Michael

At the beginning of chapter 12, we are told that "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people." This half of the verse is linked with the demise of the king of the north in the previous chapter by the phrase "at that time." Michael, mentioned in verse 13 of chapter 10 as "one of the chief princes," is called an archangel in Jude 9. In Revelation 12: 7-9 he appears as a leader of the angels who fought against the Devil. The return of the Jews to Palestine following the removal of the Moslem Sultanate may well be regarded as taking place under divine Providence operating through the medium of such a guardian angel. It is remarkable how such a small people has been able to establish themselves in the midst of their hostile neighbours during recent years. We may regard the first half of verse 1, therefore, as applicable to the present time.

2. A Time of Trouble

The remainder of verse 1 introduces the next major event: "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time: but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book." This alludes to "your people", that is Daniel's people, the house of Judah, taken into exile to Babylon, as distinct from the house of Israel, taken captive to Assyria more than a century earlier. This time of trouble is to be greater than any "since there was a nation," that is any since the existence of the Jewish nation which came into being in Palestine in 1948. This same event is described in other prophecies as taking place immediately before the Second Advent, when the Lord comes to deliver Judah at Jerusalem.

In agreement with Daniel, other Old Testament prophecies say that Judah in particular, is to be present in Palestine when it is invaded at the end of the age. In the third chapter of Joel's prophecy, God says, "In those days, and at that time when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into judgement with them there, on account of my people and my heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations, and have divided up my land, and have cast lots for my people" (v. 1-3). The "valley of Jehoshaphat" is an allusion to a

similar judgement that occurred in the reign of Jehoshaphat whose name means "God is Judge" (2 Chron. ch. 20).

Joel's prophecy continues: "Let the nations bestir themselves, and come to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the nations round about" (Joel 3: 12).

Zechariah likewise tells of an attack on Judah and Jerusalem. God says, "Lo, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all the peoples round about; it will be against Judah also in the siege against Jerusalem. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all peoples: all who lift it shall grievously hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will come together against it" (Zech. 12: 2-3).

Ezekiel devotes two whole chapters to this invasion of Palestine by a confederacy of nations headed by "Gog". The Lord says, "In the latter years you will go against the land that is restored from the war, the land where people are gathered from the nations upon the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste" (Ezek. 38: 8). He says that this invasion will come "from the uttermost parts of the north" (38: 6 and 39: 2), which would be somewhere north of the Black Sea. The invaders are named as "Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal" (38: 1).

In ancient times it was widely believed that the progeny of Magog, one of the sons of Japheth, settled in Russia. Consequently Josephus derived the Scythians from Magog, simply because their home was north of the Black Sea in the land of Magog. The same tradition was known to Jerome, and was later accepted by Isidore of Seville.

In the NEB the names are given as "Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, in the land of Magog" (cf. AV margin). The word *Rosh* is the common Hebrew word for "head", and is so translated hundreds of times in the Old Testament. It would be correct therefore, to translate this "Gog, the head prince of Meshech and Tubal," particularly as no people named Rosh is mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. But in the Septuagint the word Rosh remains untranslated, as a proper noun, in the Greek. Possibly the Greek translators knew of the people called Ros who, associated with the Alans under the name Roxolani, came to the assistance of a Scythian king in the Crimea about 110 B.C.¹ In his book *The*

¹ G. Vernadsky, *The Origins of Russia* (1957), p. 60.

Origins of Russia (1957), G. Vernadsky refutes the theory that the name Russia is Scandinavian in origin, and traces it back to this people of Rhos, or Rus, who had once dwelt in the lower Volga. This, he says, "explains the fact that the Volga was called Ros by a Greek geographer of the fifth century after Christ." Again in a Church History of the sixth century "a people called Hros is mentioned as living in the Don region" of south Russia.³

As we have seen, Daniel was told, "At that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book" (12: 1). Zechariah likewise says, "On that day the Lord will put a shield about the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (12: 8). This is amplified in his next chapter: "Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives which lies before Jerusalem on the east" (Zech. 14: 3). The effect of the Lord's coming on the enemy is described at some length in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39.

3. The Second Advent

Following the time of trouble when Daniel's people are to be delivered, the prophecy says that, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (v. 2). This clearly speaks of the resurrection of the righteous dead at the second coming of Christ. As Paul says, "Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep" (1 Thess. 4: 14). Daniel makes it clear that this resurrection does not precede, but follows, or brings to an end, the time of tribulation mentioned in the previous verse. The idea of a pre-tribulation rapture of living saints is therefore ruled out by Paul's further statement that, "We who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep" (1 Thess. 4: 15). Some seek to evade this by saying that this awakening to everlasting life means Christian conversion, or being "born again". But Daniel says that those who are raised to life are sleeping in the dust of the earth, and no one receives conversion after burial in the earth.

² *ibid.*, p. 64.

³ *ibid.*, p. 78.

Now Daniel says *many* of those who sleep shall awake, implying that there are others who do not awake at this time. If he had meant a general resurrection, he would have said, "Those who sleep shall awake." The Book of Revelation also says there is to be a first, as well as a general resurrection: "I saw the souls of those who have been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God. . . . They came to life again, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life again until the thousand years were ended" (Rev. 20: 4-5).

In Daniel's prophecy it is by no means clear who are meant by those who awake "to shame and everlasting contempt." Pre-millennialists⁴ usually take this to mean the unrighteous who are raised at the end of the millennium to be judged before the great white throne (Rev. 20: 11-12). It is pointed out that, "It is not at all unusual for the Old Testament in prophecy to include events separated by a considerable span of time as if they concurred in immediate relation to each other."⁵ Prophecies relating to both the first and second advents (e.g. Isa. 61: 1-2) are given as examples. This passage in Daniel, which is extremely condensed, should best be interpreted in the light of the later and more explicit prophecies in the New Testament such as Revelation 20.

Another possibility should not be overlooked: even as Christians "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good *or evil* according to what he has done in the body" (2 Cor. 5: 10; cf. Rom. 14: 10-12). So there will be Christians who have done things in this life on account of which they may later be ashamed, or even held in contempt, but who will nevertheless be saved on account of their faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As Paul said elsewhere, "If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (1 Cor. 3: 15-15).

4. A Time for Instruction

In the third verse of chapter 12, Daniel passes rapidly on to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, but, in the highly condensed style at the close of this prophecy, he passes over the restora-

⁴ J. F. Walvoord, *Daniel* (1971), p. 288; Leon Wood, *Commentary on Daniel* (1973), p. 318.

⁵ Walvoord, *op cit.*, p. 289.

tion of all Israel which Ezekiel shows follows immediately after the Second Advent. As we have seen, only the house of Judah is to be present in Jerusalem when the nations are gathered there for judgment. Following the account of the destruction of Gog and his allies (Ezek. 39: 1-20), the Lord says, "Therefore, thus says the Lord God: Now will I restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel . . . when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies' lands, and through them have vindicated my holiness in the sight of many nations" (Ezek. 39: 25, 27).

In an earlier prophecy, God had told Ezekiel to take one stick for Judah, and another "for Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the tribes of Israel associated with him; and join them together into one stick" (Ezek. 37: 16-17). For, said God, "Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all sides, and bring them to their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms" (v. 21-22). This final restoration of all Israel is the one referred to in most of the Old Testament prophecies, and is not to be confused with the return of a remnant of Judah which has taken place already before the invasion of Gog.

Following this restoration of all Israel, there is to be world-wide instruction in the administration of divine law. Here Daniel says, "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever" (12: 3). Here the Hebrew for "those who are wise" is the same as in chapter 11, verses 33 and 35, where it is said "the people who are wise shall make many understand," hence the reading in the AV margin, *teachers*, which conveys the meaning better.

The same is foreseen by other prophets such as Micah, who says, "Many nations shall come, and say: 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths,' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Micah 4: 2).

5. The Time Periods

Chapter 12, verses 5 to the end, form a chronological appendix to Daniel's last prophecy. Here two separate questions were asked,

to which two different answers were given. It is important not to confuse the two.

(a) *The Roman Period*

In his vision Daniel saw two men, and he asked one of them, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" (v. 6). It appears that this question must refer to the activities of the Wilful King, for he alone is said to "speak astonishing things against the God of gods" (11: 36). No other wonders are mentioned in the whole of chapter 11, which is little more than a list of wars. As we have seen, the Wilful King represents the Byzantine emperors.

In his reply, a man clothed in linen said that "it would be for a time, two times, and half a time; and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished" (v. 7). There is no mention whatever of "the holy people" in chapter 11, but, as we have seen, this chapter is closely linked with chapter 8, since both foretell the conflict between the Moslem powers and the Byzantine empire. In chapter 8, we read that the Moslem little horn would destroy "the people of the saints" (v. 24), or "the mighty and the holy people" (AV). We saw that this meant principally the Byzantine empire, because Christianity was the official religion of that state. The time period given in 12: 7 is, therefore, to end with "the shattering of the power" of the Byzantine empire. This period, given as "a time, two times, and half a time," is one of 1260 years as in chapter 7.

Now the Byzantine empire collapsed under the onslaught of the Seljuk Turks following the fateful battle of Manzikert in August 1071, when the Byzantine emperor Romanus IV was taken prisoner. At the time the Turks were more intent on gaining control of the Moslem lands of Syria and Palestine to the south, and were only making sporadic raids on the eastern frontier of the empire. Consequently, when Romanus attacked them and was defeated by Alp Arslan in the region north of Lake Van, he was offered peace on payment of a ransom and a marriage alliance. Romanus was set free to make the necessary arrangements in Constantinople, but his subjects rejected both him and the Turkish terms.⁶ Therefore early in 1072, Alp Arslan sent an army against the Byzantines which, after a further victory, struck right across Asia Minor as far as the Sea of Marmora.⁷ Thus, as Prof. J. M. Hussey points out, "It was

⁶ CMH IV A (1966), p. 210.

⁷ *Cambridge History of Islam* I (1970), p. 234.

the deposition of Romanus IV by the civil party, not his defeat at Manzikert, which opened the doors to a series of civil wars and usurpers, and to the systematic conquest of Asia Minor by the Seljuks.⁸ The conquest actually began early in 1072.

Going back 1260 years from 1071/72 brings us to 190/189 B.C., when the Romans first crossed from Europe into Asia, and defeated Antiochus the Great, king of Syria, the most powerful monarch of the time. As we saw, Antiochus had had grandiose ideas about restoring the Greek empire.⁹ In 196 B.C., he had crossed into Europe, but was driven out again following his defeat by the Romans at Thermopylae in 191.¹⁰ His ultimate humiliation came when he was again defeated at Magnesia on the west coast of Asia Minor in January 189,¹¹ after which he had to pay tribute to the Romans. It would be fair to say that it was through this victory that the Roman empire replaced the Greek Seleucids as the predominant world power, and it remained so for 1260 years until that position was challenged by the Turks after the battle of Manzikert.

Roman Rise	Roman Fall
following	following
Magnesia	Manzikert
Jan. 189 B.C.	Jan. 1072
(— — — — — 1260 years) — — — — —)	

Earlier historicist writers do not appear to have noticed this application of the "time, two times, and half a time," but have imagined that the 1260 years were to run concurrently with the other time periods given in Daniel 12.

(b) *The Moslem Periods*

The second question Daniel asked was, "O my Lord, what shall be the issue of these things?" In reply he was told that "the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end," and in the following verse it is said that "none of the wicked shall understand; but those who are wise shall understand" (v. 9-10). We may well conclude that many false applications of these periods would be put forward, and only late in time will those who are wise discover the truth and be able to apply them correctly.

⁸ CMH IV A (1966), p. 210.

⁹ See above, page 124 f.

¹⁰ CAH VIII, p. 213 f.

¹¹ CAH VIII, p. 223.

After this warning comes the key verse which says, "From the time that the continual burnt offering is taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (v. 11). As it stands, this appears to be a reference to the statement in 11: 31, saying that certain armies "shall take away the continual burnt offering, and they shall place the abomination that makes desolate." As we saw, this was fulfilled in A.D. 70. But unfortunately the most crucial point has been obscured in almost every translation of 12: 11. This was pointed out more than a century ago by E. B. Elliott: "There is one thing most important to note, though hitherto, I believe, universally overlooked—viz. that the *definite article* is wanting before the word *abomination* in verse 11: so that the correct rendering of the clause would be, 'From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and *an* abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be 1290 days'." He then points out that the desolating abomination of Dan. 11: 31 cannot be the one referred to, and "is almost *specifically excluded* from being the subject of reference."¹² The argument here is exactly the same as we employed on page 94 regarding Daniel 8: 12, where we saw that *a* host must be different from *the* host previously mentioned.

On the next page Elliott went on to say that, "Another abomination making desolate (indeed the only other of past times that I can think of) was that of *Mohammedanism*, by which, as agent, alike Christendom and Jerusalem were desolated." He might also have mentioned that Palestine, once a land flowing with milk and honey, was transformed into a barren and desolate wilderness by the bad husbandry of the Moslems, leading to widespread soil erosion. When Elliott wrote, Jerusalem and the Holy Land were still under the domination of Turkey and the Ottoman caliphs, but since then the last verse of Daniel 11 has been fulfilled. Not only has the Turkish "king of the north" been removed, but his empire came to an end in 1922 when the sultan was deposed. Taking this as the terminal date, and subtracting 1290 years, we arrive at A.D. 632, when Mohammed died and the Caliphate was established.

But this is not all; Daniel's prophecy continues, "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days (v. 12). This period evidently runs concurrently with the

¹² E. B. Elliott, *Horae Apocalypticæ* (3rd edn.) IV, p. 169.

JUDAH		BABYLON & EGYPT	
	<u>Jehoiakim</u>	B.C.	
	Ac	609	17 Nabopolassar
	1	608	18
	2	607	19
	3	606	20
	4	605	21 Battle of Carchemish
	5	604	Ac Nebuchadnezzar
First Surrender of Jerusalem →	6	603	1
	7	602	2
	8	601	3
	9	600	4
	10	599	5
	11	598	6
Second Surrender →	Ac	597	7
	1	596	8
	2	595	9
	3	594	10
	4	593	11
	5	592	12
	6	591	13
	7	590	14
	8	589	15
Siege of Jerusalem began →	9	588	16
	10	587	17
	11	586	18
Final fall of Jerusalem →			19

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

The chronological table of events on page 156 is based on information given in the Bible, correlated with the dates in secular history provided by the *Babylonian Chronicle*. In order to understand how it is compiled, it is essential to have some knowledge of ancient calendars used in western Asia. These were based on a lunar month of about $29\frac{1}{2}$ days. As twelve lunar months fall about eleven days short of a solar year, it was necessary about every three years to add an extra thirteenth month to the year in order to keep it in step with the seasons. Originally the new year began in the spring with the first day of Nisan coinciding with the new moon next after the equinox, but if the state of the crops was late, or the new moon happened to be early, the new year could be delayed, and an extra month added to the old year.

The Jews followed much the same system as the Babylonians in beginning their ceremonial, or religious year in the spring, but they also had a civil year according to which the regnal years of their kings were counted. This began in the autumn on the first day of the seventh month, Tishri,¹ but the months continued to be numbered from Nisan, in the same way as we still regard April as the fourth month, even though it is the first month of our financial year. In consequence, the regnal years of the Babylonian kings were always six months out of step with those of the Jews.

¹ E. R. Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (1966), p. 17, 23; Talmud: *Rosh Hashanah*, 2a-2b.

In numbering the regnal years, both the Babylonians and Jews used what is known as the "accession year system". According to this, the remainder of the calendar year in which a king began to reign was called his "accession year", his first regnal year counting only from the next new year's day, the first of Nisan in Babylon, or the first of Tishri in Jerusalem. The length of the reign was normally given as a whole number which was the same as the last regnal year. This system was convenient in that a period of time extending over several reigns could readily be computed by adding together the lengths of the individual reigns.

Applying this to the reign of Jehoiachin, said to have been three months and ten days (2 Chron. 36:9), and bearing in mind that his reign ended on the second day of the twelfth month Adar (March 16) 597 B.C., his reign would have begun on the 22nd day of the eighth month, 598 B.C.² Since his reign lay wholly within the calendar year beginning 1st Tishri, 598, it would have been ignored when adding reigns together. This year would have been counted as the eleventh year of his father Jehoiakim, who is said to have reigned eleven years (1 Kings 23:36).

Going back these eleven years, we find that Jehoiakim's accession year began with Tishri, 609 B.C. In that year he had been placed on the throne by Pharaoh-Neco, who had deposed his predecessor Jehoahaz. Now Jehoahaz reigned only three months (1 Kings 23:31) following the death of Josiah, mortally wounded when opposing Neco and his Egyptian army who were on their way to help the Assyrians near the Euphrates. The presence of this Egyptian army on the Euphrates can be dated from the *Babylonian Chronicle* to the months Tammuz (4th month) to Elul (6th month) in the summer of 609.³ It follows that Neco deposed Jehoahaz, and put Jehoiakim on the throne, about the end of Elul or the beginning of Tishri. Since the year beginning Tishri 609 was, as we have seen, counted as Jehoiakim's accession year, Jehoahaz must have been deposed *after* 1 Tishri, and these few days should have been reckoned as his first regnal year. According to the rules, therefore, he should have been given a reign of one year, even though, as the Bible correctly says, it was only one of three months. Failure to realise this point has led to much controversy about the chronology of these times.

² CCK, p. 33.

³ CCK, p. 63; Thiele, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

Another source of difficulty has been the date of the battle of Carchemish, fought, according to the *Babylonian Chronicle*, in the summer of 605 B.C.⁴ According to our table, this was in the third year of Jehoiakim, but it appears to be contradicted by Jeremiah 46:1-2. These verses read: "The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations. About Egypt. Concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah." As punctuated in all English translations, this means that the battle took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. But it was shown half a century ago by J. Lewy,⁵ that the introductory phrases employed by Jeremiah in chapters 46, 48 and 49 indicate that the date is that of these prophecies and not that of the battle. Correctly punctuated the passage should, therefore, read: "The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations—against Egypt, concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish, and which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated—in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah."

It is generally accepted that this word of the Lord must have been given very shortly after the battle of Carchemish, for which reason it would have been superfluous for Jeremiah to state in which year that important battle took place, because everyone would have known it. On the other hand, Jeremiah frequently dated his prophetic utterances (Jer. 1:2, 47:1, 49:34), and when there are words or phrases qualifying or defining the "word" as to whom, or about whom it was given, these phrases precede the date (Jer. 25:1, 45:1). It is only because these definitive clauses are so long in chapter 46 that the date appears to have become separated from its proper connection. These two verses were intended to state that the following dirge over the defeated Egyptian army was written shortly after the battle early in Jehoiakim's fourth year which began in the last quarter of 605 B.C.

Now Jehoiakim owed allegiance primarily to Egypt, for Pharaoh Neco had placed him on the throne (2 Kings 23:34). But 2 Kings 24:1 informs us that "In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

⁴ CCK, p. 67.

⁵ *Mitteilungen der Vorder-Asiatischen Gesellschaft* XXIX (1924, 2), p. 28-32.

came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years; then he turned and rebelled against him." From the *Babylonian Chronicle* we learn that in 601 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar attacked Egypt where he evidently met with defeat. This would have provided Jehoiakim with the opportunity to rebel against Babylon, as the Bible says, and the fact that this was three years after becoming Nebuchadnezzar's servant, confirms that the first subjugation of Jerusalem took place in 604 B.C.

Jehoiakim was succeeded at the end of 598 by his son Jehoiachin who would likewise have favoured alliance with Egypt. So in the spring of 597 Nebuchadnezzar again attacked Jerusalem, and deposed him, placing Zedekiah on the throne in his place. At this time many of the better class Jews were taken captive to Babylon, including the prophet Ezekiel.

Zedekiah then reigned eleven years, but for two-and-a-half years he was besieged in Jerusalem, from early in 588 until the city finally capitulated in the late summer of 586.